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Biography.

SKETCH OF THE LIFE AND CHARACTER OF JOHN CALVIN,

Taken from the *Religious Monitor*, with the addition of several extracts of a communication received from a learned and ingenious Correspondent.

Biography, or the delineation of human character, may be termed *the art of moral painting*. It represents the features of the mind, and the actions of the life, as the pencil does the lineaments of the face, and the peculiar air of the person. When the moral portrait is skilfully executed, it wants nothing to make it perfect, but what it is impossible it ever can receive, the animation of real life; and is as superior in importance and utility to the most striking picture, as the living character is to the inanimate bust. It not only revives the memory of friends long forgotten in the silence of the dead, but gives them a much more extensive range of acquaintance than when alive, by transmitting not their name only, but their attainments and virtues, their imperfections and errors, for the imitation and warning of future generations.

The lives of those, who have been raised up as instruments of reviving, reforming, strengthening, or extending the knowledge of divine truth, must be interesting in no common degree to the friends of genuine godliness. No apology, therefore, is necessary for introducing to the notice of our readers, the following sketch of the life and character of that illustrious reformer and defender of the faith, *John Calvin*, to whom the greater part of the Protestant world look back, as under Providence, one of the most eminent supporters of that form of religious doctrine and discipline, which they believe to be consonant to the word of God. When we consider his piety, and his ardent zeal for the truth, his uncommon talents, and indefatigable industry, his deep and solid learning, and his various other accomplishments; we must view him as one of the most eminent men of the sixteenth century, and as one of the first, the ablest, and most successful reformers.

It must be accounted a very interesting attainment for any modern Christian to become fully acquainted with this won-

derful man. A full drawn picture of him would be a valuable present to the literary and the christian world. His virtues would afford a strong spur to imitation, while his imperfections would remain a most instructive caution. But he, who shall undertake this task, must have a complete acquaintance with the political state of Geneva at that period; with the arts and intrigues of the court of Rome and her partizans at the dawn of the Reformation, and with all the obstacles which the first Reformers had to surmount.

The Reformation of Geneva, being inseparably connected with the history of Calvin, cannot be passed in silence. A concise account of it will spread light on some dark spots in the following sketch.

The Reformation was begun in Geneva long before Calvin's residence in that city. But the obstacles, which prevented or delayed its progress, were many and powerful; among which must be mentioned the ignorance, superstition, bigotry, and domineering spirit of the higher and lower clergy; and the turbulent state of the city arising partly from various factions watching one another with a furious zeal, partly from the imminent danger which menaced their liberty and independence from the dukes of Savoy, and partly from their alliance with the Swiss Cantons, who opposed the Reformation with violence.

It was, indeed, something, that the canton of Berne had seceded from the church of Rome, espoused openly the Reformed cause, and encouraged its neighbours and allies to throw off the papal yoke. It was something too, that the dominant clergy, the regular canons above all, had, by their depraved manners, incurred the hatred of the best of their fellow citizens; while the interdict of the archbishop of Vienne, in the year 1527, exasperated them more and more, and the detection of priestly imposture opened the eyes of many.

In 1532, Farell daringly stept forward in Geneva, and preached the gospel doctrine, convincing many of its truth. This bold, intrepid preacher was not awed by danger. In Basil and Wirtemberg he had before encountered harsh and violent treatment; but there, as well as in Geneva, his labours were crowned with success.

Farell was followed, 1534, by one of his disciples, Ant. Froment, who, under the cloak of a schoolmaster, spread the seeds of the Reformation far and wide. But after awhile the violence of the soldiery, and the increasing tumult of the people, induced him to leave the city.

After his retreat, more rigid laws were enacted against the meetings of the Reformed. But all these proved too weak to check the impetuous ardour of the Reformers. They were yet, however, compelled to hold their assemblies in secret, in which the Lord's Supper was first administered by Guerin. They all opposed themselves vigorously to the scandalous superstitions, which had, for ages, defaced the church of Christ, though it must be acknowledged that, in the manner of their opposition, they sometimes went beyond due bounds. From the year 1538, a more sol-

id foundation was laid for the Reformation in Geneva, and the minds of the inhabitants at large became prepared to give it a cordial reception.

Viret soon joined Farell and Froment. Their preaching was unremitted, and the number of believers increased day by day. This opportunity was too favourable to be neglected by the Senate of Berne, who had been slandered for favouring the Reformtion by Furbit, a Dominican monk and doctor of the Sarbonne. The Senate demanded the punishment of Furbit. He was actually imprisoned. The irritated clergy could not brook that one of their body should be subjected to the judicature of laymen. They were countenanced by the Senate of Fribourg; but the more powerful menaces of Berne prevailed with the Senate of Geneva. After a public disputation, Furbit was again imprisoned, from which he was afterwards enlarged at the intercession of the king of France.

At length the Reformation was sanctioned by the Senate in a solemn decree of Aug. 27, 1535. Farell, Viret, and Froment had continued, under the protection of the mission of Berne, the irreligious instructions, and claimed an open toleration, till one of the churches in the suburbs was seized by the populace with the connivance of the Senate. Here Farell preached the first sermon, 1 March, 1534.

But what wisdom can avail, where intemperate zeal dictates, and when the populace is the chosen instrument for the execution of its fury and its whims? The multitude, inflamed by Farell's ardent sermons, broke every where the images. Farell thundered from the pulpit, even in the churches exclusively reserved to the Catholics, till those who yet remained were removed by a decree of the Senate, and all the monasteries suppressed, and appropriated to secular uses. A confession of faith, composed by Farell, was adopted, and sanctioned with an oath, which, for its native simplicity, as Ruchat observes, has been highly and deservedly recommended.

But what use did the Reformed make of this glorious victory? Did they obey the command of their divine Master, *to do to others, as they would that others should do to them?* No. They showed no symptoms of his meekness. They treated the Catholics with uncommon harshness, and proved too often, that they were more eager to imitate, than to abhor their example. The mass was abolished, the images in the church proscribed, and the refractory punished with imprisonment and exile. With the same intemperate zeal they went on reforming the churches in the country, till the civil magistrate interposed, and notwithstanding the cries of Farell, "that the work of God ought not to be obstructed," obtained a month's time for the dissenters to reflect maturely on a topic so serious.

But in this reprehensible point Farell was not alone. Nor was he so guilty, as in more favourable circumstances he might appear to us. He was unquestionably a worthy man; a man of eminent abilities, and genuine piety. His blemish was the blemish of all the Reformers. Even Melanchton was not free.

He admonished the Senate of Venice of the errors of Servetus, because he had *heard* that his book was then in circulation. Melanchton procured the death of two Socinians, and approved the condemnation of Servetus. Moreover it ought not to be omitted, as it must influence our judgment respecting Farell's and Calvin's transactions, that at Geneva religion and politics were uncommonly blended together; that the Roman Catholics had become dangerous citizens, through their connexions with the bishop and dukes of Savoy, and that the safety of the Republic was often endangered by them.

Having given this brief history of the state of Geneva previously to the time when Calvin began to have influence there, we shall now turn our attention to the character and usefulness of that extraordinary man.

John Calvin, the son of Gerard Chauvin (latinised Calvinus) and of Joanna Le Franc, was born 10th July, 1509, at Noyon, in Picardy, a province of France. His father being a man of talents and probity was highly esteemed by his fellow citizens, and particularly by a noble family, under whose roof John received the first rudiments of education. From his native city he was sent to Paris, where he made uncommon proficiency in the Latin language under Maturinus Corderius, one of the most distinguished teachers of the age. He afterwards removed to the college of Montague, then under the direction of a learned Spaniard; and there leaving his fellow students far behind him in classical attainments, he commenced the study of dialectics, the barbarous logic of the schools.

His father originally intended him for the church, for which he appeared to be peculiarly fitted, by his early seriousness of disposition, gravity of manners, and abhorrence of vice, which he sharply reproved in his companions. With this view, in 1521, a benefice was procured for him in the cathedral church of Noyon, and in 1527, a parochial curacy in the neighbouring village of Pont l'Evesque. But becoming acquainted about this time with Peter Olivetan, a Protestant, he imbibed from him the principles of the Reformed religion, which disgusted him with the superstitious errors of Popery; and his father beginning to think that the profession of law would be both more honourable and more lucrative, in compliance with his desire, he determined to relinquish theological pursuits.

In consequence of this determination, he went to Orleans, and there, under the tutorage of Peter de l'Etoille, undoubtedly the most eminent civilian of his time, entered with such ardour on his new studies, as soon enabled him occasionally to supply his master's chair. He was indeed more like a teacher than a scholar: and when he left the University, as a testimony of approbation and high respect, he received an unanimous and gratuitous offer of a doctor's degree. Mean while, he did not neglect sacred learning in private; but even in this made such attainments as to excite the admiration of all the friends of pure and undefiled religion in that city. He seldom slept till the night was far advanced, and

after a very few hours repose, resumed his meditations on the subject that had engaged his attention the preceding evening. This habit regularly continued, improved his memory, facilitated his acquisition of knowledge, expanded and strengthened all the powers of his mind. But his incessant application produced a weakness in his stomach, which was the cause of various diseases, and at length of his premature death.

Attracted by the reputation of the University of Bourges, to which the talents of Alciat, an Italian lawyer, added lustre, Calvin went thither to attend his lectures, and there gained the friendship of Wolmar, who taught him Greek, and for whom he had such an esteem, as afterwards to dedicate to him his Commentary on 2d Corinthians. He remained at the University till the sudden death of his father recalled him to his native country; but during his residence, he preached more than once at Lignieres, a village in the neighbourhood. He soon after visited Paris, where, in 1533, he wrote his Commentary on *Seneca de Clementia*, an author whom he read and illustrated with great delight. In a few months he became acquainted with the principal Protestants in Paris, who at their private meetings earnestly besought him to give himself wholly to the Lord, and to them in the work of the ministry. He yielded to their entreaties; but Paris was not destined to be the scene of his labours. For, having urged Nicolas Cop, rector of the University, boldly to preach the truth before the doctors of the Sorbonne, when Cop thereby excited the resentment of his learned audience, and being cited to appear before their parliament, consulted his safety by flight, the officers who were sent to apprehend him, not finding him, forcibly entered Calvin's house, and seized his letters, among which there were many from the friends of the Reformation, which had almost involved them in destruction. But this threatened storm was prevented by the prudent intercession of the queen of Navarre, the only sister of the French king, a woman of extraordinary powers, and warmly attached to the Protestant cause.

Calvin, to escape the cruel designs of his enemies, left Paris, and took refuge at Saintonge, where, at the request of a friend, he published some short religious addresses, and dispersed them among the people. In 1534, he returned to Paris, whither he seems to have been directed by Providence, that he might check, for a season at least, the zeal of Servetus, who was disseminating his Antitrinitarian heresies in that city. Undaunted by his exposure to the malice of his adversaries, Calvin would have held a public conference with Servetus, but this heretic, after having agreed to it, shrunk from the interview.

This year a dark cloud hung over the interests of the Reformation in France, raised by the indiscreet zeal of some of its adherents. "They had affixed to the gates of the Louvre, and other public places, papers containing indecent reflections on the doctrines and rites of the Popish church. Six of the per-

sons concerned in this rash action were discovered and seized *. The king, in order to avert the judgments which it was supposed their blasphemies might draw down upon the nation, appointed a solemn procession. The holy sacrament was carried through the city in great pomp; Francis walked uncovered before it, bearing a torch in his hand; the princes of the blood supported the canopy over it; the nobles marched in order behind. In the presence of this numerous assembly, the king, accustomed to express himself on every subject in strong and animated language, declared that if one of his hands were infected with heresy, he would cut it off with the other, and would not spare even his own children, if found guilty of that crime. As a dreadful proof of his being in earnest, the six unhappy persons were publicly burned before the procession was fmished, with circumstances of the most shocking barbarity attending their execution."†

Calvin retired to Orleans, whence, accompanied by his old Saintonge friend, he proceeded to Basil, where he studied Hebrew; and though anxious to be concealed, felt himself constrained, on the following account, to publish his Institutions of the Christian Religion. The Protestant princes of Germany, with whom Francis, under a pretended regard for their religious tenets, had made an alliance, having in the most pointed terms expressed their indignation at his suspicions, not to say treacherous and inhuman conduct, to exculpate himself, and preserve their friendship, which he wished to employ against his rival Charles V. he affirmed that he had punished only some fanatical and seditious Anabaptists, whom he knew the Protestants as well, as the Papists abhorred.

This false and unprovoked insult, Calvin judged it necessary to contradict and repel; and with this design, in 1535, published his Institutions, to which he prefixed a preface addressed to Francis, which in force of argument, energy of expression, and elegance of latinity, has seldom been equalled, and never excelled.

After visiting the duchess of Ferrara, daughter of Louis XII. of France, a princess of eminent piety, who received and entertained him with every mark of esteem, he returned to the neighbourhood of Paris, but finding the country a scene of confusion and danger, he settled his pecuniary affairs, and, accompanied by Anthony his only brother, resolved to reside at Basil or Strasburg. The war on the frontiers of France and Germany made them travel by the way of Geneva, whither he was thus, unintentionally on his part, led by the hand of Providence. Farell and Viret, who a few years before had introduced the gospel into Geneva, earnestly importuned him to become their associate in the ministry. He was with difficulty persuaded, not indeed till Farell had ventured in the name of the Almighty to denounce a curse against him if he should refuse. He yielded at length to the solicitation of the presbytery and

* According to Beza, in his life of Calvin, the number was *eight*.

† Robertson's Charles V. Book 6.

magistrates, by whose suffrage, with the concurrence of the people, he was chosen to be their Minister and Professor of Divinity in the year 1536.

Fully prepared by his long course of study, by his ardour of mind and habits of devotion, for the faithful exercise of the ministerial functions, he commenced his public labours by composing a concise and simple Formula of Christian Doctrine, to which he added a short Catechism, for the use of the church at Geneva, then scarcely emancipated from antichristian bondage. Persuaded that some form of ecclesiastical government was absolutely necessary for maintaining the unity and order of the church, and preferring the Presbyterian, as being not only the most simple in itself, the best calculated for the impartial administration of discipline, as well as removed at once from the imperiousness of Episcopacy, and the irregularity of Anabaptism;* but as, in their opinion, the most agreeable to the intimations of scripture, Calvin, Farell, and Viret, resolved to establish it at Geneva. Though opposed both by public violence and private malignity, they succeeded; and after the people had solemnly abjured Popery, on the 20th of July, 1537, they took an oath of adherence to certain articles of doctrine and discipline, which also received the sanction of the Senate.

Besides his own church, Calvin took on himself the care of believers, wherever they dwelt, and, by his correspondence, administered to them the instruction, reproof, or consolation, which their conduct or their circumstances required. The conformity of multitudes to the Romish forms of communion, while they secretly embraced the doctrines of the Reformed church, about this period particularly, called forth his zeal for the truth, and was the occasion of his writing two masterly and elegant Epistles, in which he exhorted the people to renounce their idolatrous communion, and the authority of their priests, whose conduct he reprobated as flagitious and detestable.

His attention was, in the following year, occupied by dissensions in his own city, which he in vain endeavoured to heal. When a whole state embraced the religious system of the Reformers, though all became by profession Protestants, multitudes, it is obvious, would retain much of their original prejudice and error. At Geneva, accordingly, though all professed the true religion, many continued in the practice of those impurities to which they had been addicted when their consciences were under the guidance of the priests of Rome. Political discussions concerning the war then raging in Savoy, were also the means of producing variance and animosities among the rich and the noble, and consequently tended to injure the cause of religion. Farell, Calvin, and Corald, his colleague, beheld with deep con-

* The Anabaptists of that time, or Mennonites, held opinions subversive at once of Christian truth and social order. They employed arms to propagate their system, and were the cause not only of commotions, but of bloodshed throughout the provinces of the German empire. See Mosheim, Cent. 16. § 3. pt. 2.

cern this departure from the spirit of the gospel, and laboured at first by the arts of gentleness and persuasion, to bring back their fellow citizens to a sense of their duty. When these means were unsuccessful, they had recourse to the established discipline of the church, threatened the refractory with the sentence of excommunication, and openly declared that they could not dispense the Lord's supper to persons who had broken the bonds of charity, peace, and unity, and who resisted the ecclesiastical jurisdiction to which they had sworn subjection. These divisions were increased by another cause: the church at Geneva had used common bread for the sacrament, and abolished all holy days, while the Protestants at Berne had retained the use of wafers. In this they were confirmed by the synod of Lausanne, which also appointed the Genevese to observe the same custom. Calvin and his colleagues appealed to a synod which was to meet at Zurich. The newly elected syndics * of Geneva, being leaders of the most numerous faction, taking advantage of this appeal, represented Calvin and his two colleagues as enemies to the peace of the church; and having assembled the people in a tumultuous manner, commanded these faithful men to leave the city within two days, because they refused to administer the ordinance of the supper. When this sentence was intimated to Calvin, he said, "Verily, if I had served men, I would have had a sorry reward; but it is well that I have served *Him*, who does not forget a single promise that he makes to his servants."

This event might seem to threaten the subversion of the Reformation at Geneva; but it was overruled by Providence for promoting the interests of the gospel in other places, for improving the talents of the exiled ministers, and even for purifying the corruptions, and rectifying the disorders of the Genevan church. Obeying this unchristian edict, these three venerable pastors retired to Zurich, where a synod of the Swiss churches being convened, the church of Berne was requested to use all its influence to procure the re-admission of these faithful men to their charges at Geneva. The attempt was ineffectual; and Calvin, having left Zurich, went first to Basil, and then to Strasburg, where, by the unanimous request of the Senate and ministers, he was called to the theological chair, with the appointment of a competent salary. There, he not only taught divinity with universal applause, but with the consent of the Senate, modelled the church after the Genevan form. In his exile, he was not unmindful of his former charge; but kept up a constant correspondence with them, exhorting them to return to the purity and unity of the faith. By these epistolary labours, he succeeded in quieting the commotions which the decree of the synod of Lausanne concerning the use of wafers in the sacrament had excited, and in preventing the influence of

* The syndics were the chief magistrates of Geneva, annually elected by the votes of the community.

Sadolet, the bishop of Carpentras, (a city of Dauphiny) who exerted all his powers of eloquence to bring back his dear friends, as he styled the Senate and people of Geneva, to the Romish communion. These letters breathe a spirit of ardent affection for his beloved flock, and inculcate on them the important duties of self-examination, humility, and repentance, on account of their spiritual declension; of love to their pastors, and of a tolerant disposition towards those who differed from them in matters of inferior importance. Their dissensions he represents as marks of divine judgment against their sins, and uniformly prays that they might be led by the Spirit of truth into the love and practice of Christian virtue.

While at Strasburg, in 1540, he published an enlarged edition of his Institutions, and a short but comprehensive Treatise on the Lord's Supper, which was of singular use to the church at that time, when the Lutheran and Popish doctrines on this point were the subject of frequent discussion. During this period, he was the means of converting several Anabaptists, some of whom afterwards became bright ornaments of the Protestant cause. In 1541, he was called to assist at two diets held by the authority of the emperor Charles V. at Worms and Ratisbon, for the purpose of accommodating matters between the Protestants and their adversaries. There he gained the friendship of Melanchton, whose gentleness and modesty made him an advocate for reconciliation, but whose timidity made him often shrink from that opposition, which Luther carried on with such vehemence and success, against the tenets and practices of Rome.

To be continued.

Religious Communications.

OUTLINES OF A THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTION.

1. This Intitution shall be equally open to Protestants of every denomination, for the admission of young men of requisite qualifications.

2. Every candidate for admission into this seminary shall produce satisfactory evidence, that he possesses good natural and acquired talents, has honourably completed a course of liberal education, and sustains a fair moral character. He shall also declare that it is his serious intention to devote himself to the work of the gospel ministry, and exhibit proper testimonials of his being in full communion with some church of Christ; in default of which he shall subscribe a decla-

ration of his belief of the Christian religion.

3. Students in this seminary shall be aided in their preparation for the ministry by able professors; whose duty it shall be, by *public* and *private* instruction, to unlock the treasures of divine knowledge, to direct the pupils in their inquiries after sacred truth, to guard them against religious error, and to accelerate their acquisition of heavenly wisdom.

4 The *public* instruction shall be given in lectures on natural theology, sacred literature, ecclesiastical history, Christian theology, and pulpit eloquence.

5. In the lectures on *natural theology*, the existence, attributes, and providence of God, shall be demonstrated; the soul's immortality and a future state, as deducible from the light of nature, discussed; the obligations of man to his Maker, resulting from the divine perfections and his own rational nature, enforced; the great duties of social life, flowing from the mutual relations of man to man, inculcated; and the several personal virtues deduced and delineated; the whole being interspersed with remarks on the coincidence between the dictates of reason and the doctrines of revelation, in these primary points; and, notwithstanding such coincidence, the necessity and utility of a divine revelation stated.

6. Under the head of *sacred literature* shall be included lectures on the formation, preservation, and transmission of the sacred volume; on the languages, in which the Bible was originally written; on the septuagint version of the Old Testament, and on the peculiarities of the language and style of the New Testament, resulting from this version and other causes; on the history, character, use, and authority of the ancient versions and manuscripts of the Old and New Testaments; on the canons of biblical criticism; on the authenticity of the several books of the sacred code; on the apochryphal books of both Testaments; on modern translations of the Bible, more particularly on the history and character of our English version; and also critical lectures on the various readings and difficult passages in the sacred writings.

7. Under the head of *ecclesiastical history* shall be comprised lectures on Jewish antiquities; on the origin and extension of the Christian church in the first three centuries; on the various sects and heresies in the early ages of Christianity; on the characters and writings of the fathers; on the establishment of Christianity by Constantine, and its subsequent effects; on the rise and progress of popery and mahometanism; on the corruptions of the church of Rome; on the grounds, progress, and doctrines of the reformation; on the different denominations among Protestants; on the various constitutions, discipline and rites of worship, which have divided, or may still divide the Christian church; on the state and prevalence of paganism in our world; and on the effect, which idolatry, mahometanism, and Christianity have respectively produced on individual and national character.

8. Under the head of *christian theology* shall be comprehended

lectures on divine revelation; on the inspiration and truth of the Old and New Testaments, as proved by miracles, internal evidence, fulfilment of prophecies, and historic facts; on the great doctrines and duties of our holy Christian religion, together with the objections made to them by unbelievers, and the refutation of such objections; more particularly on the revealed character of God, as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; on the fall of man, and the depravity of human nature; on the covenant of grace; on the character, offices, atonement, and mediation of Jesus Christ; on the character and offices of the Holy Spirit; on the scripture doctrines of regeneration, justification, and sanctification; on evangelical repentance, faith, and obedience; on the nature and necessity of true virtue or gospel holiness; on the future state, on the immortality of soul and body, and the eternity of future rewards and punishments, as revealed in the gospel; on the positive institutions of Christianity; on the nature, interpretation, and use of prophecy; and on personal religion, as a qualification for the gospel ministry.

9. Under the head of *pulpit eloquence* shall be delivered a competent number of lectures on the importance of oratory; on the invention and disposition of topics; on the several parts of a regular discourse; on elegance, composition, and dignity in style; on pronunciation, or the proper management of the voice and correct gesture, and on the immense importance of a natural manner; on the rules to be observed in composing a sermon, and on the adaptation of the principles and precepts of ancient rhetoric to this modern species of oration; on the qualities in the speaker, in his style, and in his delivery, necessary to a finished pulpit orator; on the methods of strengthening the memory and of improving in sacred eloquence; on the character and style of the most eminent divines and best models for imitation, their respective beauties and excellencies in thought and expression; and above all, on the transcendent simplicity, beauty, and sublimity of the *sacred writings*.

10. It shall be the duty of the professors, by *private* instruction and advice, to aid the students in the acquisition of a radical and adequate knowledge of the sacred scriptures in their original languages, and of the Old Testament in the septuagint version; to direct their method of studying the Bible and other writings; to superintend and animate their pursuits by frequent inquiries and examinations, relative to their progress in books and knowledge; to assign proper subjects for their first compositions, and to suggest a natural method of treating them; frequently and critically to examine their early productions, and in a free, but friendly manner, to point out their defects and errors, in grammar, method, reasoning, style, and sentiment; to improve them in the important art of reading, and to give them opportunities of speaking in public, favouring them with their candid remarks on their whole manner; to explain intricate texts of scripture, referred to them; to solve cases of conscience; to watch over their health and morals with

paternal solicitude, and by every prudent and Christian method to promote the growth of true piety in their hearts; to give them friendly advice with relation to their necessary intercourse among men in the various walks of life, and especially with respect to the manner, in which it becomes a minister of the meek and lowly Jesus to address both God and man, whether in the assembly of his saints, or in the chamber of sickness and of death.

LETTERS FROM A CLERGYMAN TO HIS SON.

LETTER VI.

My Son,

In reading my preceding letters, I believe you have been led to this reflection, that the work of the sincere and humble Christian is much more plain, simple and easy, than the work of a man of the world. The former makes his duty the rule of his conduct, and indulges no painful anxiety about the consequences. The latter is solicitous about the consequences, and pays little attention to duty. The apostle says, "We have our conversation in the world in simplicity and godly sincerity, not by fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God."

The man governed by the wisdom of the world is always in uncertainty and perplexity. Human wisdom is short sighted; it cannot look far into futurity; nor foresee what will be the remote consequences of the policy, which it adopts. The very means, which it applies to the procurement of wealth, honour, or preferment, may operate to quite contrary effects. New expedients must then be chosen, and new disappointments will soon ensue. Or if the measures chosen seem successful in the first essay, remoter consequences may be adverse and disastrous, and doubtless will be so. I need not refer you to history, sacred or profane; your own recollection will verify this remark. The man, who, laying aside the plain maxims of virtue and morality, governs himself by the policy of the world, is never satisfied; never consistent with himself; never uniform in his conduct. He is continually shuffling and changing his means, always anxious and embarrassed; wishing to undo what he has done; and doing what should not be done; still too proud to confess his error, and too selfsufficient to ask advice. If danger threatens and probable means of deliverance fail, he takes some desperate measures, trusting to the contingence of events. If he falls into ruin, he draws many after him, and endeavours to console himself by imputing the blame to others.

The pious and honest man escapes all this vexation and misery. "He walks uprightly, and walks surely." He has one plain rule to guide him. This is the word of God, and this, he knows, will never mislead him. If ever he is in doubt, he recurs to this rule, and his doubt is removed; for his way is marked before him. He feels no embarrassment; for he knows what is good, and what God requires of him. He walks right on in the way prescribed, committing his way to God, and trusting that his thoughts will be

established. If he meets with some disappointments, still he maintains his resolution, and pursues his course; he will not turn aside to avoid the evils before him; for he believes these, if they meet him, may be the means of improving his virtue, and ensuring eventual success; that some rough passages will teach him to tread more cautiously, and will prepare him to enjoy more pleasantly the smoother parts of his journey. As long as he finds himself in the path of wisdom, he feels no anxiety what may be before him; for this, he knows, will lead him safely along, and bring him out happily at the end. And whatever may happen by the way, he believes it will aid his progress, and facilitate his journey through life. When anxious thoughts arise and utter their complaints, he rebukes and silences them by the recollection, that he has pursued the line of duty, and committed his way to God. If his worldly designs miscarry, he will not murmur; for he has committed them all to God's disposal. He knows there is a plain inconsistency in committing his works to God, and complaining of God's allotments. This is taking back what he once resigned, and reclaiming what he had given away.

How happy is the life of the good Christian, who lives by faith in God, and trusts with him the interests of time and eternity? A consciousness of the rectitude of his heart and the purity of his intentions give him peace and serenity. A persuasion of God's wisdom, goodness, faithfulness and power fills him with confidence and hope. The promises of the gospel open to his view glorious and endless prospects. Faith appropriates an interest in the promised blessings, and hope begins the enjoyment of them. Amidst the changes of the world he rests in the immutable God. In times of danger he dwells secure in the secret place of the Most High, and abides serene under the shadow of the Almighty. In worldly embarrassments he keeps his mind cheerful and unruffled by a humble trust in divine wisdom. He is solicitous only to understand and pursue the path of virtue and righteousness; thus, he knows, he shall enjoy peace, and, whatever may be his lot in life, no evil will ultimately befall him. He commits his soul to God in well doing, as to a faithful Creator, casting all his cares upon him.

When death approaches, he calls up the exercise of that faith, by which he has lived, and resigns himself anew to God in humble hope, that as he has been faithful to the death, so now he shall rest from his labours, and his works shall follow him.

That you may enjoy the conscious pleasures of religion in life, and experience its solid comforts in death, is the wish and prayer of your affectionate parent, EUSEBIUS.

A LETTER ON THE AUTHOR OF THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

Dear Sir,

IT was with pleasure, I undertook the task of relieving your mind, with regard to the authenticity of the Epistle to the Hebrews. I shall now try to eluci-

date this subject further, and give you a more correct opinion of this book and its presumptive author, in the words, as far as it is possible, of the excellent Venema, who after Mill and Michaelis, has thrown further light upon this subject.

The letter was probably written to the Jewish Christians at Alexandria; unquestionably, to some of that denomination, united in a church; as appears from chap. xiii. 18, 19. This supposition is strengthened from the style, as well as from the use of Philo's phraseology, who too was an Alexandrian. Dr. Mill and J. D. Michaelis understood it from the Hierosolymitans. But the style of this epistle is an objection against this conjecture. It was probably written in Greek, as it bears more marks of an original composition, than of a translation. It was unquestionably written before the destruction of Jerusalem, of which more than one evidence will appear to the attentive reader of the epistle. The author's aim was to confirm the Jewish Christians, still staggering and inclining to the Mosaic rituals, in the Christian faith, and wean them from their attachment to the institutions of the Mosaic law. He executed his design with great skill and address, maintaining throughout the epistle, and illustrating the position, that, under the gospel economy, unlimited obedience was due to Christ; deriving his arguments from the transcendent excellency of Christ above all angels who held a high place under the Sinai covenant, (chap. i. & ii.) above Moses its institutor; above the prophets, who were aiding it, (chap. iii. & iv.) and above all the priests, its prime ministers.

Learned commentators pretty generally agree, that Paul is not its author. There are, however, mighty exceptions, Mill and Michaelis. But if not Paul, who then? Luther and Beza have given it to Apollos, and Venema has defended this opinion with his usual acuteness. Before copying his arguments, it may spread more light upon this subject, to say a few words about Apollos.

Apollo, Apollos, or Apollodorus, was a companion of Timothy and Titus. Titus iii. 13, Heb. xiii. 23. He was eloquent and deeply initiated in the knowledge of the divine mysteries and rites of the Mosaic law. This is evident, not only from the epistle to the Hebrews, which you might deem here a precarious assumption, but from his title λογιος eloquent, Acts xviii. 24. and 1 Cor. iii. 6. Paul *planted*, Apollos *watered*. He was born a Jew, at Alexandria, Acts xviii. 24. deeply versed in the books of the Old Testament, *mighty in the scriptures; of a fervent spirit*, who at Ephesus, though *only* acquainted with the doctrine of John the Baptist, and knowing *only* the first elements of the kingdom of God, not even knowing the effusion of the Holy Ghost, Acts xix. patronized, *fearless* in the cause of Christ against the Jews, Acts xviii. 25. (Venema reads ἀφοβως pro ἀκριβως, as Philip i. 14) while he afterwards was more accurately instructed by Aquila, ακριβεστερον ib. v. 26. Thus better learned, he went to Achaia, and tarried at Corinth, where he was of great use to the believers, helping them much, who had

believed, through grace. So the punctuation ought to be. Apollos remained awhile with Paul, when he was at Ephesus, but declined returning to Corinth, though Paul wished it. 1 Cor. xvi. 12. He was afterwards with Titus in Crete, Tit. iii. 13, from which he went to Italy, and wrote, as Venema supposes, this epistle to the Hebrews. At length, it seems, he returned to Alexandria, Heb. xiii. 19. In this city, if conjecture may be indulged, he instituted a catechetical school, by others attributed to Mark.

Give now a candid consideration to the arguments, with which Venema supports his opinion. If it is correct, we have gained another important point with regard to the history of our canonical books.

Besides the presumption, that Paul would not have withholden his name, which he did not in any of his other epistles; it has

1. Some weight, that there does not appear a shadow of evidence, that the writer was an apostle, or invested with any dignity or authority in the church whatsoever; yea, he distinguishes himself from the leaders, and excuses himself, that he wrote admonitions and consolatory letters, ch. xiii. 17, 18, 22, which agrees with Apollos not being with Paul.

2. He joins himself to the Hebrews, who did receive the doctrine of Christ from *other* witnesses, as well as they; chap. ii. 3. and mentions no where any immediate revelation. The contrary way is usual with Paul, Gal. i.

3. It suits better the character of Apollos, than that of Paul, that he aims at a more sublime instruction, as it was natural for Paul to *plant*, for Apollos to *water*. Of this there are specimens, chap. v. 11. vi. 1.

4. The style which he uses, is round, rhetorical, oratorical. To Apollos, called λογιος, an elegant and graceful elocution is ascribed, Acts xviii, 24, 27. This too is more applicable to Apollos, than to Paul, whose style is more concise and energetic. It would be further an easy task to bring forward words and phrases unusual to Paul.

5. It appears evident, that the author has a particular relation to the Hebrews, to whom he writes; so that he not only addressed them in a letter, but requested their prayers to God, that he might soon return to them, chap. xiii. 19. which does not agree with the character of Paul, the apostle of the Gentiles, chiefly, not of the Jews.

6. It is more than doubtful whether Paul would have freely conversed in Italy where Timothy was imprisoned, which however this author asserts, ch. xiii. 23. I know it is commonly thought, that the writer declares himself *bound*, x. 34. but this is owing to an incorrect reading, as for δεσμοις μου must be read, δεσμιοις, which is required by the verb, συμπαθεω, to have compassion, comp. ch. xiii. 3.

7. It does not agree with Paul, to call such an extensive letter, *a short one*, xiii. 22, as Paul in a much shorter letter to the Galatians, says, "see how largely I have written with mine own hand," Gal. vi. 11. It suits better the style of an orator to call it a *short letter*.

8. The only objection is from 2 Pet. iii. 15, which, if taken

away, shall take the place of an argument. Paul is said to have written to the same, as Peter, who wrote to the dispersed Jews.

Here cannot be understood *one*, but various letters, as directly follows, and *not* particularly written to the Hebrews or Jews, but to believers in general, Greeks as well as Jews, in which letters he, as well Peter, spake of the same things, to wit. of the reasons of the delay of the last judgment, and God's long suffering, not willing, that men should perish, but that all should repent, and be saved, Jews as well as Gentiles.

If still any one pretends, that Paul's epistle to the dispersed Jews must be here understood, nothing hinders in that case indeed, from understanding Peter's saying as referring to St. Paul's lost epistles; as it is beyond doubt, that Paul wrote more letters, than those actually preserved; which is evident from 2 Thess. iii. 17. as no other now remains between the second and the first.

CANDIDUS.

☞ Readers are requested to examine the passages referred to.

NOTE.

The Editors acknowledge the ingenuity of Venema's defence, and thank their learned Correspondent for the pains he has taken to select and communicate the arguments. They must however be allowed to suggest the importance of great caution and long examination on the part of readers, as none of the arguments appear fully conclusive, and some of them are easily exposed. Besides, some of the ideas contained in the defence tend to diminish the authority of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

SURVEY OF NEW ENGLAND CHURCHES.

Continued from page 259.

THERE is no truth more clearly revealed in scripture, none confirmed by more various and substantial facts, or more certainly known and felt by Christians, than *the native depravity of man*. The evidence, which scripture furnishes of this truth, is very clear and multiform. It is contained in every part of the Bible. Whether we look into the Old Testament or the New; whether we attend to the rites of the Mosaic, or the Christian system; whether we examine the historic, the devotional, the prophetic, the doctrinal, or the preceptive parts of the sacred volume, we find irresistible proof of this sad and humbling truth. Without admitting it, the scriptures can never be understood according to the rules of a just and fair construction. Without admitting it, many parts of the Bible, which the inspired writers manifestly consider, as eminently important, will be destitute of meaning and use. In demonstrating this deplorable truth, the whole course of events, learned from observation and from history, conspires with the holy scriptures. How plain and certain is it to every wise observer, that mankind, whether considered in a social or individual state, are wholly corrupt, the children of disobedience, transgressors from the womb.

In the view of good men, this truth is attended with the highest evidence. A thousand arguments in confirmation of it are derived from their growing acquaintance with themselves.

Every day's experience adds to their conviction, that in them there is, naturally, no good thing, and that the apostle can be charged with no extravagance or harshness, when he describes the unrenewed heart as *enmity with God.* They have no more doubts of their moral corruption and vileness, than they have of their existence.

That the disease of sin is deeply wrought in the very nature of man, rests upon evidence of the same kind with any principle in natural philosophy. No philosophic truth is supported by more evident appearances or more numerous operations, than the doctrine of native depravity. The facts of a moral nature, which prove this doctrine, may be ranked with the facts of a physical nature, which prove the doctrine of gravitation. The fruits of human corruption appear so early; they are so various, so constant, and so copious, that we can with no more reason doubt its existence, than the existence of any natural appetite or passion.

But notwithstanding the various and abundant proofs, upon which this doctrine rests, it is often denied and opposed. At this day there is a general disposition manifested, especially among the learned, to change or conceal its awful scripture form, and to consider it as of small consequence, in what manner it is believed, or whether it is believed at all. Instead of the inspired sentiment, that mankind are shapen in iniquity and conceived in sin, or that depravity affects their moral nature from their first existence; many consider it merely as the accidental effect of the temptations, to which they are early exposed, or of some unpropitious circumstances attending their education. Most people imagine, that depravity is very partial, by no means extending to the whole moral nature, or to all the moral actions of man. They consider it as their misfortune rather, than their sin, exculpating themselves, because their state is the consequence of Adam's transgression. And some, who advocate the doctrine of total depravity, represent it in a light, which is plainly inconsistent with the free agency, the moral obligation and accountability of sinners.

But without enumerating all the errors respecting this doctrine, which are entertained and defended at the present day; it is my design to guard the churches of Christ against those errors, by pointing out the sources from which they proceed, and the various hurtful effects which they produce.

One perpetual source of error respecting the character and actions of lapsed man is, *the practice of judging by a wrong standard.* If men would keep their eye steadily fixed on the moral excellence of God, the perfect pattern of all goodness; or would duly consider the nature and extent of what his law requires; they would be convinced of the entire moral depravation of man. In the light of divine holiness they would see, that the thought of the imagination of his heart is evil continually and from his youth. Judging by the perfect

and unchangeable law, they would readily admit the exact truth of the following description of mankind, in Rom. iii. "There is none righteous, no, not one. There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit, the poison of asps is under their lips. Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness. Their feet are swift to shed blood. Destruction and misery are in their ways; and the way of peace have they not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes." But on this subject, men judge by a wrong standard; a standard not only different from the moral law, but opposite to it. Instead of the holy commands of God, they set up, as a rule of judgment, the corrupt opinions and maxims of the world; maxims, which justify what the law condemns, or, at best, substitute a regular external deportment for holiness of heart.

Another false standard of judgment is the character of those men, whom many writers and the world in general treat with the highest respect and honour. Their spirit and conduct, differing widely from that rule of moral excellence which the Bible authorises, lead to very erroneous conclusions respecting good and evil. Even characters deservedly esteemed for Christian piety cannot, without danger, be considered as the standard of our judgment. In this world, the best Christians are very imperfect. We must not set them up as infallible guides; nor suffer them to occupy the place of Jesus Christ. Our attachment to their virtues should not lead us to admire their weaknesses, or to justify or imitate their faults.

I have suggested two of the false standards of judgment on subjects of a moral nature; the corrupt opinions and maxims of the world, and the characters of men admired for their talents, their exploits, or their virtues. With such false standards of judgment before them, men are induced to "call evil good, and good evil; to put darkness for light, and light for darkness." Judging by these delusive rules, they form very inadequate and erroneous opinions of human corruption, greatly mistating or wholly rejecting a doctrine, which lies at the foundation of evangelical truth. Beware, then, Christians, of these, and indeed of all false rules of judgment. The word of God is your only infallible standard. When you would form a correct opinion of the character of mankind, in general, or of the nature of any particular dispositions or actions; ask not what are the maxims adopted by the fashionable, unthinking world; nor what is the opinion of people in general. Look not at those, who are admired for their splendid circumstances, accomplishments, or actions. Confide not implicitly even in those, who are held in high estimation for Christian wisdom and goodness. But look to God's holy law, and to the character and life of Jesus, where the excellence and the broad extent of that law appear with living beauty. With a con-

stant and reverential regard to that character and law, you will be directed to proper views of apostate man. You will see that none of his actions or inclinations, while destitute of renewing grace, can be pronounced holy. You will be able, with great ease, to remove the delusive veil of external decorum, which so often conceals internal deformity. When the outward actions of sinners appear most fair and engaging, your habit of judging, according to the judgment of God, will still lead you to say, "an evil tree cannot bring forth good fruit. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?" Thus you will be satisfied, on scripture grounds, that man's heart is by nature wholly corrupt, and that this radical corruption diffuses itself universally through his actions, which, considered in relation to the moral law, are all unholy. In this sentiment you may depart exceedingly from the common opinion; but you will secure the advantages of agreeing with the Spirit of truth.

But there is another unfailing source of error on this subject, which must not be overlooked; that is, *the delusive influence of pride, and the other evil passions of the heart*. These passions are a dark mist, which prevents clear vision. Pride excludes spiritual light. Under its influence, men turn away from that picture of human nature, which is drawn by the pencil of truth. They can readily understand and admit speculations, which leave to pride the full possession of the heart, its chosen throne. But how can they admit the mortifying belief, that mankind, and themselves in particular, are so defiled, so criminal, and so degraded, as the scripture declares them to be? In opposition to the serious belief of this doctrine all the imposing eloquence of pride and every corrupt passion is exerted. No wonder, that a truth so wounding to selfconceit, so destructive to unlawful pleasure, so alarming and distressing, is so seldom believed, so much obscured, and so violently assaulted. No wonder, considering what the human heart is, that any error, however palpable, is admitted, rather than a doctrine, which sullies man's glory, and covers him with dishonour and shame. Here is the grand source of mistake on this subject. If there were less pride in the world, the doctrine of human depravity would meet a less vigorous resistance. From this source even Christians are in danger. Although the scriptures are open before them, and the pure light of heaven has shone in their hearts; still their pride is not wholly subdued, and they are not sufficiently disposed to submit, without reservation, to the whole word of God. Let the churches of Christ, therefore, guard with sacred vigilance against the influence of every unhallowed passion, so that they may preserve from diminution and alteration the doctrine of human corruption, as it stands in the sacred volume. Let the whole salutary truth be received and felt, however painful to those feelings, which would shun the light; and let every error and misrepresentation, however soothing to human nature, be rejected as the bane of Christian virtue.

It was my design not only to hint at the sources of prevailing error on this subject, but also to notice the pernicious effects, which those errors produce. In order to this, it is necessary to observe, that the doctrine of the entire moral corruption of man is closely and inseparably connected with the other great doctrines of inspiration; so that the denial of the one involves the denial of the others, and erroneous views of the one are followed by erroneous views of the others. To descend to a few particulars; it is a well known fact, that those who deny the moral corruption of man, deny also *the atonement of Jesus Christ.* And it is consistent that they should. For if mankind be not by nature in the most depraved, guilty, ruined state, the common notion of redemption by the Son of God is marked with absurdity. Christ's dying for all implies that all were dead in trespasses and sins. If man were not of this character, and therefore justly obnoxious to the endless wrath of God, the cross of Christ would lose its glory and be turned into foolishness. Not only the necessity, but the propriety and justice of God's sending his Son to suffer and die, rest upon the question, *What is the moral state of man?* If he be so depraved and criminal that, according to God's holy law, he is without help and without hope, righteously doomed to everlasting punishment; then redemption appears the work of infinite wisdom and love.

These two doctrines are as intimately connected in the experience of believers, as in correct reasoning. The more deeply they are affected with their own guilt, deformity, helplessness, and misery, the more clearly do they discern the necessity, the nature, and the glory of the atonement. While they have proper views of their own character, every petition for pardon, every desire of salvation, every hope of the eternal inheritance is associated with the precious blood of Jesus. But if persons are insensible of their pollution and ill desert; what can they understand of Christ's mediation? What conception can they have of the infinite value of the sacrifice, which he offered up to God?

The doctrine of depravity is nearly related to *the doctrine of regeneration.* When our Saviour taught the necessity of the new and heavenly birth, he taught it in connexion with the innate corruption of man. "That which is born of the flesh, is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit, is spirit." So did the apostle. "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." What need of quickening, if mankind are not dead? What need of a *new creation*, if they are not the subjects of radical and native corruption? What occasion for being *born again*, if the first birth left them pure? If they retain any degree of real goodness, that goodness, without a renovation of nature, may be cultivated, improved, and perfected. How can they, who deny or overlook the complete sinfulness of their nature, be convinced, that they must be regenerated by the Spirit of God, in order to be admitted into heaven? This important scripture doctrine is weakness and

folly to all, who see not the desperate wickedness of their hearts.

The doctrine of *justification by the grace of God* rises or falls according to men's ideas of themselves. If we consider our moral nature, as totally alienated from God, and our actions altogether unholy; on what can we found our hopes of justification before God, but the perfect righteousness of Christ? But if we are so blinded by pride, as to consider our nature pure, and our life only interspersed with occasional deviations from rectitude; what idea shall we have of justification by the free and abounding grace of God? How unmeaning or disgusting must this doctrine be to the self-righteous, arrogant spirit of unhumbled sinners!

The same connexion is obvious between the doctrine now under consideration, and *the gospel doctrine of sovereign election*. Admitting that mankind are universally in a state of such extreme sinfulness, or criminal depravity, as the scripture affirms, we at once conclude, that everlasting punishment might be justly inflicted upon the whole world, and that the salvation of any part of such a guilty race must be the effect of mere mercy. And as similar traits of moral character belong to all; those who are saved must be considered the objects of *discriminating grace*. The hypothesis, that God eternally chose men to salvation, on account of any virtue or good works foreseen in them, or that they are actually regenerated, on account of any thing in their character, which renders them more worthy than others of the divine favour, implies the denial of the scripture doctrine of human guilt. Duly attending to this doctrine, and deeply impressed with it, we shall easily understand the consistency and necessity of divine predestination. We shall perceive the richest grace in God's electing *some* to everlasting life, and the purest justice in his punishing the rest according to their demerit. If we object against God's exercising his sovereign wisdom and love in this manner, it must be because we ignorantly overrate our own merit, and think ourselves too good to be threatened on such principles. Insensibility to the moral state of man will always lead to wrong conclusions respecting the purposes and ways of God, and will, especially, conceal the beauty, consistency, and sublimity of the doctrine of eternal predestination. But to those, who yield full and cordial assent to the awful account, which scripture gives of apostate man, the doctrine of sovereign election will not only appear plain, and worthy of humble belief; but will be reviving and glorious, the spring of all their hopes, the firm ground of their confidence, the rock of their salvation.

It would be easy, if needful, to show in a more enlarged view the natural and unalterable connexion between this doctrine and the other principles of evangelical truth. There can be no just notion of these without the belief of human depravity. If we do not believe this doctrine, we may as well cast away the whole Bible, and return to the darkness of heathenism. And let me add, brethren, that there is no danger

of having too impressive apprehensions of a truth so fundamental in the gospel scheme. The clearer, the more extensive and affecting your views of human corruption, the juster and more efficacious will be your ideas of all the truths, which relate to the divine work of redemption.

But the most important consideration still remains; viz. that the denial of the native and entire corruption of man has *a most hurtful practical influence.* This will appear with peculiar force, if we contemplate the salutary practical effects produced by the cordial belief of this doctrine. Those, who, through divine illumination, well understand the nature of human corruption, and are seriously impressed with the evils implied in it, have the most powerful motives to constant *penitence* and *selfabasement.* In view of this, in his own case, Paul pronounced himself the chief of sinners, and less than the least of all saints, and cried out, oh wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death! It has been under the deep impression of this doctrine, that all believers have abhorred themselves, and been clothed with *humility.* The full belief of this doctrine is nearly connected with *faith* in the Redeemer. Christians, seeing themselves to be guilty and helpless, and approving the character of the Saviour, gratefully receive him in all his offices, and trust in him as able to save to the uttermost. The more clearly they discover that their hearts are defiled, that there is nothing in them to answer the demands of the law, and nothing to furnish any ground of confidence; the more complete and firm is their faith in the Son of God. This doctrine, rightly understood, gives believers *the profoundest sense of their obligations to God.* If they are permitted to indulge the reviving idea, that they are delivered from the slavery of sin, and introduced into the happy family of the saints; they forget not to acknowledge the divine hand which delivered them. Ascribing nothing to themselves, they say, with the liveliest, humblest gratitude, *by the grace of God we are what we are.* The knowledge, which scripture and experience have given them of the deceit and wickedness of their hearts, produces *a practical conviction of their constant dependence on divine aid.* Sensible that, without Christ, they can do nothing, they rely on his grace, and go forth to every duty and every suffering in his strength. By the same views they are excited to *constant prayer.* When duly affected with their own blindness, guilt, poverty, and wretchedness, how fervent are their supplications to God! With what sincerity, with what unceasing earnestness do they approach the throne of grace, saying, "I acknowledge my transgression, and my sin is ever before me. Behold, I am vile. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. Create in me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me. Work in me both to will and to do." Such language agrees with the feelings of believers in all ages. Their heart affecting views of human depravity become the strongest motives to fervent

prayer not only for themselves, but also for others. They are filled with pious concern for mankind. They feel the tenderest pity for perishing sinners, and with many sighs and tears cry to God, that Christ may be formed in them the hope of glory. The same views tend to promote a spirit of *love and candour*. Knowing the plague of their own hearts; how far they come short of duty; how strongly their remaining corruptions urge them to sin; and how much they need the candour and forbearance of man, and the forgiveness of God, they put away all wrath and bitterness, and evil speaking, and become more and more kind, tender hearted, and forgiving.

This brief and imperfect statement of the practical effects, which the serious belief of human depravity produces, directly shows how hurtful must be the effects of denying it. Persons, who overlook or deny their depravity and guilt, exclude repentance, humility, and faith. How faintly do they acknowledge their obligation to redeeming love! How little do they feel themselves indebted to the blood of Christ! Instead of a due conviction of their constant dependence on God's help, they trust in themselves. Lifted up with a high opinion of their own wisdom and goodness, they naturally indulge an uncharitable, overbearing, unforgiving spirit towards others. And as to devotion,—they are the persons, who, "through the pride of their countenance, will not seek after God." If they pretend to pray, they do it as the Pharisees did, with that unhumbled, self-righteous heart, which is an abomination in the sight of the Lord. In short, they who deny the doctrine now under consideration, or are not duly affected with it, are hardened through the deceitfulness of sin, and have yet to learn the first lesson of Christian wisdom. Let the churches, then, watch and pray, that they may not be misled by the spirit of error, which has so extensively gone forth, aiming, by various means, and with awful success, to blind the eyes of men to their own deplorable corruption and guilt, and to harden their hearts against all the gracious doctrines of the everlasting gospel.

PASTOR.

Selections.

SACRED CRITICISM.

On the offence of David, and the people, in his numbering them; and the equity of the punishment. 2 Sam. xxiv. 1. 1 Chron. xxi.

BY DR. WARD.

FROM several passages in the Old Testament, compared with each other, it appears, that this census, or numbering of the people, was a sacred action; as the money was to be applied to the service of the temple. (Exod. xxx. 12—16. Num. i. 2, 3. 2

Chron. xxiv. 6.) It was not like that in other nations, to know the strength of the government; for God was their king in a peculiar manner, and promised to protect them from their enemies, and to multiply them as the stars of the sky, while they obeyed his laws. David's crime, therefore, seems to have lain in converting a sacred action to a civil purpose. He was culpable both in the thing itself, and the manner of doing it. For whereas by the rule given to Moses, in the passages referred to above, they were to number the males from twenty years old and upwards; David gave orders, that all should be numbered, who were fit for war, though under that age. (See 2 Sam. xxiv. 1. 1 Chron. xxvii. 23.) This must have been highly criminal in David now in his old age, after so many instances of the divine favour expressed towards him. And as to the people, their offence seems to have consisted in their compliance with that order. He was culpable in giving the order, and they in obeying it. And therefore Joab, who was sensible of this, and unwilling to execute the command, asks David, Why he would be the cause of trespasses in Israel? 1 Chron. xxi. 3. For by that means he reduced them to the difficulty of disobeying God, or himself, as their prince. It was doubtless their duty to have obeyed God; but we find, as it generally happens in such cases, that the majority at least choose to obey their king. However, it appears, that Joab was weary of the office, (1 Chron. xxvii. 23.) and did not go through it. Probably he might find many of the people uneasy, and averse to submit to the order.

Besides, it was expressly enjoined, that when the people were to be numbered from twenty years old and upwards, the Levites should be excepted, as being appointed for the service of the tabernacle. (Num. i. 47.) And as they were not called out to war, so they had no share in the land of Canaan allotted to them, when it was conquered by the other tribes, who were therefore ordered to give them a number of cities, each tribe out of their portion, which was accordingly done. (Num. xv. Josh. xxi.) And Josephus assigns that reason for it, when he says: "Moses, because the tribe of Levi were exempted from war and expeditions, being devoted to the service of God, lest being needy and destitute of the necessaries of life, they should neglect the care of their sacred functions; ordered the Hebrews, that when, by the will of God, they possessed the land of Canaan, they should give to the Levites forty eight large and handsome cities, with two thousand cubits of land round the wall." But David seems to have ordered them likewise to be mustered, with a military view, which perhaps was an aggravation of his crime. For it is said, that when Joab, by his command, numbered the people, they were eleven hundred thousand men that drew sword. And it is added; But Levi and Benjamin counted he not among them, for the king's word was abominable unto Joab. (1 Chr. xxi. 5, 6.) So that it looks as if his orders were to count them with the rest. Indeed we find them once armed

upon an extraordinary occasion, which was to guard the temple at the coronation of Joash king of Judah. For at that time they were ordered to encompass the king round about, every man with his weapons in his hand. (2 Chron. xxiii. 7.) But that was in the temple, where the rest of the people were not permitted to enter. And besides their religious functions they were sometimes employed in other civil offices. So David, when he was making preparations for building the temple, appointed six thousand of them for officers and judges. (1 Chron. xxiii. 4.) Grotius indeed observes with regard to this fact of David, that he declared the people innocent: Which he seems to have concluded from what David says, 1 Chron. xxi. 17. But it does not appear, from what has been said above, that they were altogether blameless, though not equally criminal with himself. And in such a case, the equity of a national punishment is acknowledged by Philo and Josephus, in the passages cited from them by Grotius.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SPECULATIVE AND PRACTICAL RELIGION.

It will scarcely be denied, that some whose names stand foremost on the lists of theologic fame, have been little influenced by those very truths, which they have laboured, and frequently with triumphant success, both to elucidate and defend. Such writers have given their days and nights to the study of the sacred canon, while their souls have reaped no practical benefit; and though the student has risen from his labour, an acute and luminous commentator and critic, yet, if conduct be the test of principle, incapable of exhibiting any just claim to the character of a Christian. By what allurement are those speculative divines to whom I advert, induced to consume the midnight oil over a book, wherein the essential difference between scientific theology and practical religion is so clearly ascertained, and so impressively urged on the conscience? Permit me to transcribe an answer to this inquiry, from the writings of an English divine, who flourished in the seventeenth century.

"Sometimes the sinner seeketh his happiness and content in largeness of knowledge, much learning, and curious speculation about the nature of the creatures, yea, and about God himself. But perhaps it will be found, that these are near of the same nature with sensitive delights. For it is not the excellency or goodness of God himself that delighteth them; but the novelty of the thing, and the agitation of their own imagination, phantasie, and intellect thereupon, which is naturally desirous to be actuated, and employed, as receiving thereby some seeming addition to its own perfection: and that, not as from God, who is the object of their knowledge, but as from the mere enlargement of knowledge in itself; or, which is far worse, they make the study of God and divine things which they delight in, but

subservient to some base inferior object: and so, though they delight in studying and knowing God, and heaven, and scripture, yet not in God as God, or the chief good; nor in heaven as heaven; nor out of any true saving love to God; but either because, as some preachers, they make a gainful trade of it, by teaching others, or because it is an honour to know these things, and be able to discourse of them, and a dishonour to be ignorant: or, at best, as I said before, they desire to know God, and divine truths, out of a delight in the novelty, and actuating, and natural elevation of the understanding hereby. It is one thing to delight in knowing, and another to delight in the thing known. An ungodly man may delight in studying and knowing several axioms or truths concerning God, but he never delighteth in God himself. So a studious man desires to know what hell is, and where, and many truths concerning it: but he desireth not hell itself, nor delighteth in it. A godly man desireth to know the nature and danger of sin, and Satan's way, and wiles in temptations: but he doth not therefore desire sin, and temptation itself. So a wicked man may desire to know the nature of grace, and Christ, and glory: and yet not desire grace, and Christ, and glory. It is one thing to terminate a man's desire and delight in bare knowledge, or the esteem, and self advancement that accrues thereby; and another thing to terminate it in the thing which we desire to know, making knowledge but a means to its fruition. The acts of the understanding are but preparatory to the acts of the will, and so are but imperfect initial acts of the soul, as having a further end than their own proper object; and therefore it is, that philosophers place no moral habits in the understanding, but all in the will; for till they come to the will, (though they be in a large sense morally good or evil, virtuous or vicious, yet) they are but so in an imperfect kind and sense: and therefore they call such habits only intellectual."

When the Marquis of Rosny was appointed, by Henry the Fourth of France, his ambassador to the court of London on the death of Queen Elizabeth, the elder Servin presented his son to that nobleman, and begged that he would use his endeavours to make him a man of some worth and honesty. Young Servin was a prodigy of genius and understanding; and among his extraordinary attainments it is recorded, that, "in theology he was so well skilled, that he was an excellent preacher, whenever he had a mind to exert that talent, and an able disputant, for and against the reformed religion, indifferently." Yet in this very man, says the illustrious historian,* "might be found all the vices contrary to nature, honour, religion, and society; the truth of which he himself evinced with his last breath, for he died in the flower of his age, perfectly corrupted by his debaucheries, and expired with a glass in his hand, cursing and denying God."

Is not this anecdote an illustration, in some measure, of the extract? [*Ch. Obs.*

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* Sully's Memoirs, book xvi.

The following is a transcript, with some slight alterations, of a short anonymous sketch written many years ago by the late Rev. Sir J. Stonehouse, entitled "The Faithful and Unfaithful Minister contrasted."

THE FAITHFUL MINISTER.

He has good ends in view when he solicits admission into holy orders. He has a genuine principle of love to God and Christ, and deep concern for the salvation of himself and his hearers. He takes no sinful, indirect, or suspicious methods to get a living, but submits himself to Providence, and is not eager to enrich himself or his family. He labours with activity in the vineyard, whatever be his station in the church. Godliness is his gain, and serving Christ the fruit of his labours, and the end of his life.

He may also be known by his doctrine.

He insists much on the depravity of human nature, and lays before his hearers their pollution, guilt, and weakness, in order to produce those convictions of their misery and danger, which form the foundation of genuine conversion.

He insists much on the necessity of divine grace, and the influence of the Holy Spirit, to enlighten the understanding and purify the heart; and directs them to pray earnestly for those blessings which the Lord Jesus is exalted to bestow.

He preaches Christ, his person, his offices, his atoning blood, his merits and intercession, as the ground of our hope of pardon, acceptance, and eternal life; yet strongly urges the necessity of moral duties and obedience, but by motives taken from the gospel and peculiar to it. He aims to detect the hypocrite, and expose the formalist; to convince and awaken the self-deceiving sinner. Knowing the terrors of the Lord, he displays them in all their force to persuade men. He urges every motive that may induce his hearers to search and try themselves, and he reproves, rebukes, and exhorts, faithfully declaring the whole counsel of God.

He represents religion as an inward, experimental business. He recommends self-examination, secret prayer, constant watchfulness, and an habitual sense of God, in order to obtain the help of the Holy Spirit, to purify the heart, regulate the passions, and promote universal holiness.

His grand aim is to save souls. He therefore appears deeply serious, as becomes one who is much in earnest to promote the most important object that can engage the attention of a human being; and in addressing his hearers from the pulpit, he is no further solicitous to please them, than as he may best edify them.

The faithful minister may also be known by the following marks.

He is in labour abundant; preaches and catechises diligently and earnestly; performs the public offices with such gravity, seriousness, and fervour of devotion, as plainly shew that his heart is in his work; and spends

the remaining parts of the Lord's day in prayer, reading, meditation, and *the religious care of his family*.

He is diligent in his private pastoral work. Sensible of the worth of souls, he visits his parish from house to house where he has any hopes of doing good by such visits; inquiring into their state, whether they sanctify the sabbath, teach their children, and maintain family prayer. He instructs the ignorant; gives or lends them good books; endeavours, especially in sickness, to make and cherish good impressions on their hearts; and watches for their souls, as one who must give an account.

His *general temper* and behaviour are not only blameless and inoffensive, but have an evident tincture of piety and zeal. He is grave in his apparel and language, self-denying, meek, contented, and charitable to the poor. Religion appears in all his converse; he shuns vain company, and all the places of fashionable amusement; and makes it his governing aim to adorn the doctrine which he preaches, and to shine as a light in the world.

He treats his clerical brethren with respect and kindness. He is peaceable and moderate, loves those of every denomination who are peaceable and pious, and wishes success to their labours. He rejoices that Christ Jesus the Lord is preached and souls are saved, though by men of different sentiments and persuasions from himself.

THE UNFAITHFUL MINISTER.

He enters into holy orders, either from necessity or sloth, or from ambition and covetousness.

He flatters the great and the rich, be they ever so irreligious, in order to get preferment; and courts their patronage by soothing them in their vices, by espousing their political measures, or by mean compliances that are utterly inconsistent with the dignity of his office. To shew himself approved unto God, *a workman*, is no part of his study. Gain is his godliness. He serves not the Lord Christ, but his own belly; and makes it his main care to get as much of this world's goods, and live as *much at ease, as he can*.

He may also be known by his doctrine.

He dwells much on the dignity and perfection of human nature, nor will he allow that all men stand in need of *conversion*; and addresses himself to all his hearers, excepting those who are notoriously wicked, as if they were real Christians and heirs of heaven.

He dwells much on the power and will of man, denying, or seldom mentioning the aids of the Holy Spirit. He extols the merit of our own works, and thus leads men to expect salvation as the reward of their own imperfect obedience.

He seldom mentions Christ, or only as a teacher of morality. He recommends virtue from such motives as are found in the writings of Heathen philosophers, nor do his sermons abound in scripture quotations. The faith which he preaches is an assent to the truth of Christianity, without relying on the merits of its blessed Author, and deriving strength from his Holy Spirit.

He dwells on mere external forms and duties, such as coming to church, receiving the sacrament, being decent, honest, and occasionally charitable. But he is very superficial in his views of the evil and danger of sin; he prophesies smooth things, and avoids what would alarm and terrify.

He reduces the standard of religion to the inadequate conceptions of nominal Christians. He says little of inward religion, and those secret affections and exercises of which the divine persons of the glorious Godhead are the immediate objects. Self-denial, the crucifixion of the flesh, humility, and non-conformity to the world, are seldom urged by him, or at least in such vague and indefinite terms, as neither to give offence nor create uneasiness in the breasts of his hearers.

His chief solicitude, if he have any solicitude at all, is to display his learning, or his eloquence, or to amuse his hearers with something curious and entertaining; but on the most important topics he is either silent, or cold and lifeless; in other words, *he does not appear to be in earnest.*

The unfaithful minister may also be known by the following marks.

He does as little as he can without laying himself open to censure and punishment. He is short, slight, and superficial, in his public work, careless how it is done, soon weary of it, and glad when it is finished, and spends the rest of the Sunday in vain company and conversation.

He is careless about private inspection and instruction. When he visits the sick, he hurries through the form without any serious warm addresses to their conscience. His conversation with his parish savours of the world, and earthly things, and he seeks not *them* but *theirs.*

He loves sports and amusements, and is oftener seen in the assemblies of the vain than in the church. His dress too often bespeaks the vanity and levity of his mind. He loves the company of the sensual and gay; or, if his behaviour is regular and decent, there appears little of a devotional, zealous spirit in him, and he spends that time in literary amusement or idleness, which should be employed for the service of his flock. He often censures in public, and sneers in private, at those of his brethren who have more piety and zeal than himself; calls them enthusiasts, however rational they may be, or Methodists, however unconnected they may be with persons of that description, and does what he can to injure their characters, and lessen their esteem and usefulness. [*Ch. Obs.*

MISCELLANY.

For the Panoplist.

ACCOUNT OF THE BRITISH SETTLEMENT IN NEW SOUTH WALES.

THE vices of mankind have, in all ages, been the principal causes of legislation. The characters of different governments and people appear strongly mark-

ed, and their varying features are easily distinguished in their penal laws. Ignorance, bigotry and superstition are rendered visible in lines of blood. Knowledge, religion and real refinement are exhibited in traits of mildness, united with a dignified regard to social order and happiness. Amelioration is evidently the great object of legislators, under this influence, in prescribing correctives or penalties. Cases, the most atrocious, will not divest them of the robe of humanity; and their keenest sensibilities will be exerted in giving sanction to a law, which may put a period to human life.

Various have been the methods devised to correct or prevent the evils committed by the unprincipled and profligate. In Great Britain it has been the practice for many years to sentence convicts to transportation. Her colonies, especially in America, severely felt the baneful effects of such a system. The revolution put a stop to this imposition. It became expedient to seek a different situation, to which persons of this description might be sent. The eastern part of New Holland, called New South Wales, in the Southern Ocean, was fixed on: A country thinly peopled by savages, possessing, however, many natural advantages, and capable of great improvements by industry. Arrangements were accordingly made for executing the design. Wisdom, prudence and caution marked the plan. Civil and military establishments were prominent parts. Medical and clerical characters were not omitted. Implements of husbandry and for other purposes with a supply of provisions were furnished; also a number of neat cattle, horses, sheep, and swine.

In May, 1787, the fleet sailed, having on board, exclusive of sailors, 212 marines, with 28 wives and 17 children. Convicts 828, viz. males 558, females 270.

They arrived in Botany Bay in January, 1788. Governor Philip, not satisfied with the harbour, nor the adjacent lands, sought a better situation. He soon discovered Port Jackson, a capacious and commodious harbour, and the shore affording a more pleasing appearance. He disembarked at Sidney-cove, east long. 159, 19, 30, and south lat. 32, 52, 30.

The most vigorous exertions were made to erect buildings to cover the people and secure the stores. The governor's commission, the act of parliament establishing courts of judicature, and patents authorising persons named, to execute different offices, were read in the hearing of all. So great a number of persons, whose vitiated principles and habits had rendered them outcasts from their native country, required an efficient government in all its branches, to prevent the worst evils incident to their new situation. They had been sentenced to service for different periods, proportioned to their respective crimes. They were assured, not only of freedom, but of the possession of lands and other gratuities, in case their conduct, while under the operation of legal penalties, should justify such indulgence, at the termination of those periods. Notwithstanding

these motives and prospects, their propensities appeared in divers instances unconquerable. The government were soon compelled to inflict new punishments, and in some cases to make them capital.

This situation, at an immense distance from countries capable of affording regular supplies of provisions, rendered the emigrants liable to peculiar wants and distresses. To provide against such evils, and for other purposes, a detachment was sent to Norfolk Island, more than three hundred leagues N. E. from Port Jackson, destitute of inhabitants, having a convenient harbour. Its soil, however, was found very fertile, and its produce was afterwards found to be of great importance.

Having for years struggled with a variety of difficulties, and suffered many distresses, the colonists gradually experienced a pleasing change in their circumstances. By cultivating their lands and increasing their cattle, their dependence on foreign supplies continually diminished.

It is deeply to be regretted, that they have not been induced to pay equal attention to their moral and religious interests. Habituated, in general, to vicious courses, they appear uninfluenced by the efforts of successive clergymen. There is too much reason to fear, that those who might aid clerical endeavours, treat them with indifference, if not with contempt. From the patronage of government, the exertions of missionaries, and increased number of settlers, who voluntarily leave their native country with principles and habits friendly to order and virtue, a more favourable aspect is to be hoped.

The following statement, collected from an account of the English colony in New South Wales, by Lieut. Col. Collins, several years judge advocate of the colony, and afterwards Lieut. Governor of Port Philip, will give a succinct view of the progress of the colony.

About 120 ships had arrived at Port Jackson, the former part of 1800.

There were at Sidney and its vicinity,

	acres of land in cultivation.	mares & horses.	cows, oxen & bulls.	sheep.	goats.	hogs.
Sept. 1800,	6677	203	1044	6124	2182	4017
June, 1801,	9188	243	1293	6757	1259	4766
May, 1803, about	16000	344	2296	10157	1375	6278

In June, 1801, the number of European inhabitants in New South Wales was	5547	
In Norfolk Island	961	
		6508

In May, 1803, the former amounted to 7097; of whom 4193 supported themselves without receiving provisions from the government.

THE SINNER'S COMPLAINT, AND WARNING TO SAINTS.

For the Panoplist.

I.

Tell me, ye servants of the Lord,
Ye heirs of glory's bright reward,
Of crowns beyond the skies:
How can you see us glide along
The stream of life, a giddy throng,
Without unceasing cries?

II.

Our cries are scatter'd in the air:
The gracious God hears not *our* pray'r,
Nor heeds whate'er we say;
But your's ascends to meet his ear
And draw the dear Redeemer near,
To listen while you pray.

III.

Fearless, we travel tow'rds the tomb,
Defy the pow'r of wrath to come,
And waste our golden years.
You know the terrors of the Lord;
You see the splendor of his sword,
And should excite our fears.

IV.

On us, immortal wrath shall pour,
In bursting floods, an endless show'r
Of unconsuming fire.
Seraphs shall wake your souls with joy,
While they their tongues in praise employ,
And strike the sounding lyre.

V.

No beams of mercy from the skies,
Shall greet our soul's admiring eyes,
Unless you pray them down.
But if our spirits, sav'd from death,
Shall praise you, with celestial breath,
'Twill happify your own.

VI.

And when the trump of God shall sound,
And call the slumb'rers from the ground
To hear their final doom;
Should you behold us chain'd in fire,
Subject to God's eternal ire,
In hell's devouring tomb;

VII.

And hear our souls, despairing, cry,
"Oh, had you warn'd us not to die,
"*We* then had been forgiv'n:"
Could grief in paradise appear,
These words would start a mournful tear,
And damp your joy in heav'n.

VIII.

Ye saints, in ardent pray'r, unite
To plead for *sinners* day and night,
Before your Father's throne.
Then, drawn by God's resistless grace,
You'll see us flock, for life and peace,
To God, th' anointed Son.

S. T. H.

Review of New Publications.

Sermons on Important Subjects. By the late Rev. DAVID TAPPAN, D. D. *Hollis Professor of Divinity in the University at Cambridge. To which is prefixed a biographical sketch of the author; and a sermon preached at his funeral by Dr. Holmes.* W. Hilliard, and Lincoln & Edmands.

THE interests of religion and the community have rarely sustained so severe a loss, as in the death of Dr. TAPPAN. His abilities, which were confessedly of a superior order, were ardently devoted to the service of God and his generation. Providence had assigned him a sphere of action peculiarly congenial with his talents. From his pious labours, much important benefit had already resulted to the university, and the world; and more seemed yet in prospect. But in the full career of exertion and usefulness, he was summoned from this earthly scene.

It is the privilege, however, of eminently great and good men to enlighten and instruct future ages. The effusions of piety and genius are immortal. They are the best legacy which posterity can receive; and to this it has a claim. The religious public may now be congratulated that, after a solicitous expectation of four years, it receives a valuable portion of the works of Dr. Tappan. It is comprised in two volumes: one, consisting of *sermons on important subjects;* the other, of *lectures on Jewish antiquities*, delivered at the university. Of the former, we shall now attempt a brief review.

The volume is introduced by a *biographical sketch of the Author;* and a *sermon preached at his funeral, by Dr. Holmes.* The tribute here paid to departed worth is affectionate, yet discriminating and just. The picture, though beautiful, had an original. As a man and a Christian, as a preacher, a pastor, a professor of theology, and a patriot, Dr. Tappan was all which these pages describe.

The following are the titles of the sermons which compose this volume:

"Sermon I. On Christian Zeal. II. On Brotherly Reproof. III. On Secret Faults and Presumptuous Sins. IV. On the Love of God. V. On the Love of our Neighbour. VI. On Christian Charity. VII. On Christian Charity. VIII. On the Vices of the Tongue. IX. The Character of a Wise Man. X. On the Pleasures of Religion. XI. The Want of a practical Regard to religious Truth, the Cause of dangerous speculative Errors. XII. Naaman the Leper. XIII. On the Love of the World. XIV. On the Divine Preference of Mercy to Sacrifice. XV. On Christian Hope. XVI. The Christian Pattern. XVII. and XVIII. Religious Joy explained and recommended. XIX. On Prayer. XX. The Spirit, Employment, and Design, of the Christian Ministry. XXI. The Benefits of Affliction. XXII. On the Duty and Advantages of worshipping God. XXIII. On Forgiveness. XXIV. On the Connexion between denying the Son and denying the Father. XXV. Religion the one Thing needful."

These sermons must be acknowledged to possess great merit. In a style and manner equally calculated to instruct, convince, and persuade, they delineate the most important doctrines and duties of our holy religion. They place full in the reader's view, those *peculiarities* of the gospel, which, however offensive to human pride and perverseness, are the real glory of the scheme, the grand foundation of a sinner's hope, and the soul of all true piety and virtue. Yet these doctrines are exhibited in so rational a light, that it must be difficult for the most ingenious caviller to form a specious objection against them.

The author is particularly happy in illustrating the connexion and harmony of *natural* and *revealed* religion.

We observe with pleasure that, in these discourses, truth is delineated in its own lovely features, displayed in its most mild and benignant aspects, and defended only by its appropriate weapons: And while clearly presented to the understanding, it is powerfully pressed on the conscience and the heart. Every principle, every passion of the soul, is forcibly addressed. Every spring of action is skilfully touched.

These sermons abound with a species of instruction in which modern discourses are not unfrequently deficient. They accurately and thoroughly unfold the *distinguishing nature* of religion. They not only display with precision its genuine characteristics, expressions, and evidences, but clearly mark what is *opposite*, and vigilantly detect the infinite variety of methods in which it is *counterfeited*. The recesses of the human heart are laid open, its windings developed, and its various deceits exposed. The mask is plucked from hypocrisy, and every false hope is undermined. Sinners of every class, the moral and profane, the enthusiast and formalist, the secure and convinced, are addressed in language alarming and pungent, yet affectionate and alluring: While the balm of heavenly consolation is gently distilled into the soul of the doubting, desponding Christian.

Dr. T.'s *style* is his own. Varying with its subject, it is at sometimes concise, at others, remarkably copious; at sometimes, plain and unadorned; at others, rich even to luxuriance. Through an extreme ramification of thought, his sentences are sometimes too complicate for the less accurate or attentive reader. But, generally, his prominent characteristics are energy and perspicuity. He is much conversant with those *metaphorical* forms of expression which, as a great critic remarks, give us two ideas for one—conveying the meaning more luminously, and generally with a perception of delight.

It were easy to illustrate the foregoing remarks by a variety of apposite quotations. But our selections must be few and brief.

In the sermon on the "love of our neighbour," we meet with the following just and accurate observations.

"It is obvious to remark, that there are many things, which wear some appearance of love to mankind, which yet fall essentially short of the spirit of the duty before us. There is an instinctive and painful sympathy awakened by the sight of a fellow creature in distress, which engages our immediate efforts for his relief. There is a strong natural affection towards our kindred, especially towards our tender offspring. There is a characteristic sweetness and goodness of temper, which forms an early and constitutional feature in human characters. There is also an artificial politeness and generosity, the product of civilization and refinement, or at best of merely rational and philosophical considerations. There is likewise a warm affection to others, which grows out of a likeness or union of sentiment and disposition, of party or country, or which is nourished by the enjoyment or the hope of their partial friendship, and beneficence to us; not to add, that there is sometimes an affected display of kindness and munificence to individuals, or of noble patriotic zeal for the public, which is prompted by merely vain or selfish motives, and sometimes by views very base and iniquitous. It is evident, at first sight, that neither of these apparent instances of benevolence, nor all of them combined, fulfil the extensive precept in the text."

In the sermon on the first three petitions of the Lord's prayer, we have a short, but animated description of millennial purity and bliss.

"How transcendent must be the prosperity of that holy community, which obeys the laws, and enjoys the protection of this glorious Sovereign! What a golden age of the world must that be, in which his benign govern-

ment shall immediately embrace the whole brotherhood of man! Figure to yourselves, my hearers, the divine religion of Jesus enthroned in the hearts, in the families, and in all the societies of mankind! What an aggregate of private and public happiness is the immediate result! Behold each individual emancipated from the vile and destructive tyranny of sin and Satan, and restored to inward freedom, purity, and joy! See every family possessing that domestic harmony and bliss, which flows from mutual love and fidelity among its several members, and from the constant, delightful experience of the divine benediction upon their common cares, endearments, and satisfactions! Behold every civil society enjoying that public liberty and defence, prosperity and greatness, internal and external peace, which naturally arise from the universal prevalence of private and social virtue among its various members and rulers! See the benevolent principles of Christianity cementing them all into one harmonious body, and devoting their several functions, their united affections and efforts to the general welfare! See each member loving his neighbour as himself, cheerfully losing private interest in the public good, steadily practising those personal, patriotic, and divine virtues, which nourish and perfect human society, and at once zealously promoting, and delightfully enjoying, the virtuous and happy state of every fellow member, and of the community at large!"

The following remarks occur in an ordination sermon, preached on Ephes. iii. 8, 9, 10. *Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, &c.*

"As the spirit, expressed in the text, characterizes every penitent believer, so it eminently suits the profession of a Christian minister. His official studies and religious addresses constantly place before him the awful presence and majesty, the infinite holiness and grace of God, the wonderful condescension and sacrifice of Christ, the dependent and wretched condition of apostate man, the duty and importance of humble repentance and thankful praise on the part of redeemed sinners, and his own peculiar obligations to divine mercy for making him not only a partaker, but a public herald of the gospel salvation. Can we wonder, that these combined ideas roused in the bosom of Paul the most humble and grateful emotions? Ought they not to produce similar effects on every minister? Can a man, who is a stranger to these sentiments and affections, be qualified to enforce them on others? Can he skilfully and tenderly administer that spiritual medicine, the necessity and value of which he does not perceive, whose healing and comforting efficacy he has never felt? Can he suitably lead the devotions of Christians, who has never imbibed the gospel spirit; whose heart has never been tuned to the harmony of Christian love and praise? In short, the soul of a minister must be cast in the humble mould of Christianity, before he can relish and faithfully perform the condescending and self-denying duties of his office; before he can readily become all things to all men, and even take pleasure in instructing, reproving, or comforting the weakest and lowest forms of human nature. On the altar of Christian humility he must sacrifice that fondness for human applause, mental luxury, or worldly emolument; that pride of literary, ministerial, or moral eminence; that unfeeling or haughty neglect of the common people, which superior station, knowledge, and fame, assisted by human frailty or corruption, are apt to inspire. To subdue these evils, and to nourish the opposite virtues, the Christian pastor must early and deeply imbibe the self-abasing, yet ennobling views presented in our text."

The last sermon in the volume (the last which the author preached) contains a striking description of the misery of the irreligious.

"Without religion the soul cannot enjoy peace, and of course the man cannot be happy. For happiness or misery flows not so much from exterior circumstances, as from the inter-

nal state of the mind. Now a rational mind, which feels no love to its infinite Creator and Benefactor, no delight in the Supreme Good, no confidence in the favour of Him, on whom its eternal fate depends, must be inwardly poor and wretched, though surrounded with all the sources of earthly felicity. Such a creature must feel himself in an unnatural, distempered, and therefore painful condition. He must feel the torture of desires unsatisfied, of faculties prostituted, of hopes disappointed; of passions at once contradictory, clamorous, and unbounded; he must, whenever he soberly reflects, endure the anguish and terror, inflicted by an upbraiding conscience and a frowning God. His only refuge from this anguish is in thoughtless dissipation, or in a rapid succession of worldly pursuits and indulgences. But this refuge forsakes him in the gloomy intervals of solitude, of external danger and distress, and especially on the bed of death. The honest and great teacher, death, gives new light and activity to his reflecting powers; it brings into lively view his God dishonoured and incensed, his Redeemer insulted, his soul neglected and ruined, his fellow men, and even his dearest friends, corrupted, and perhaps destroyed by his criminal example, principles, or unfaithfulness. To complete this picture of wo, the hand of death separates him forever from those worldly objects, to which all his affections, habits and pleasures were attached. At the same time it excludes him from the beatific presence of that Being, who only could make him happy; or rather his own confirmed depravity renders him incaple of sharing in the pure and refined enjoyments of the invisible world, and of course subjects him to extreme and hopeless misery."

In the course of the volume, some inaccuracies occur; but they are not numerous; nor is it needful to particularise them. In a posthumous work they will be readily overlooked.

The world is full of sermons. Yet so much is there of the *original* and *impressive* in the volume before us, that we doubt not it has already engaged its share of the public attention. Nor are we less confident, that the more it is known, the more it will be prized by readers of sentiment and taste, and especially by the cordial friends of evangelical truth and vital piety.

Essays in a Series of Letters to a Friend on the following Subjects. 1. *On a Man's writing Memoirs of himself.* 2. *On Decision of Character.* 3. *On the Application of the Epithet Romantic.* 4. *On some of the Causes by which evangelical Religion has been rendered less acceptable to persons of cultivated Taste. By John Foster.* 2 *vols. in one.* 12*mo. First American from third London Edition.* Hartford. (Con.) Lincoln & Gleason.

These Essays, though occupying, on an average, half a volume each, appear in the form of Letters. For this the Author has offered the best apology in his Preface, where he tells us that they were real Letters, written to a friend. To the man, who reads the work, however, no apology will be necessary. If he has the emotions, which we have felt, the embodied thoughts will so wholly engross his attention, that he will hardly think of their dress; much less will he find time to examine the fashion of it, and still less to point out its defects.

The first Essay, "On a man's writing Memoirs of himself," is a striking proof, that a subject, apparently old, and, at first glance, connected with those which are decidedly so, can, in

the hands of a man, who understands his business, lose in a moment its threadbare dulness, and excite a lively and eager attention. The γνωθι σεαυτον of antiquity has hardly escaped a single moralist, (and who is not a moralist?) since the days of Solon; yet here it will be seen standing in a posture and with a dignity, which Solon never knew, and which the well meant enthusiasm of his followers hardly contrived to realize.

Our Author, in recommending this plan to his friend, does not intend that he should prosecute it with the view of publishing the Memoirs; neither is it his design, that he should collect those facts and events of his life, which might have befallen any other man, as well as himself. On the contrary, they are to be mere Annals of his *Mind*, a delineation of the most prominent of those circumstances, which have made him what he is. The motives, which he suggests to prompt him to this task, are these: The gratification of a laudable curiosity of knowing the past life and feelings of one in whom he cannot but be concerned—of himself: The discovery of the manner, in which he has thought and acted, and by what he has been influenced, in the few moments which have elapsed, since he commenced an infinite duration: And, above all, the sight of a faint miniature of the character, he will probably sustain, through all the following ages of time.

This task, he acknowledges, will be difficult, because we neither mark what our feelings indicate, nor remember what they are. Occasionally, however, past scenes flash on the mind with a vivid, but unaccountable effulgence, and enable us to seize on their minutest circumstances with the distinctness of vision. Places and things too, by association, will raise to life thoughts and feelings long since forgotten, especially feelings of guilt.

"No local associations," says Mr. F. "are so impressive as those of guilt. It may here be observed, that as each one has his own separate remembrances, giving to some places an aspect and a significance which he alone can perceive, there must be an unknown number of pleasing, or mournful, or dreadful associations, spread over the scenes inhabited or visited by men. *We* pass without any awakened consciousness by the bridge, or the wood, or the house, where there is something to excite the most painful or frightful ideas in the next man that shall come that way, or possibly the companion that walks along with us. How much there is in a thousand spots of the earth, that is invisible and silent to all but the conscious individual.

I hear a voice you cannot hear;
I see a hand you cannot see."

Our lives, thus reviewed, will appear to have been a course of education, formed by instruction, company, books, and the influence of the world. The first emotion will be regret at the small influence of instruction. Yet, though small, it will be seen to have been real, and in a few instances unaccountably great. These of course should be recorded. Our companions, too, in every period of life, will be found to have helped us to a great part of what we are; especially a few individuals among them. These of course we must judge, and often, when we would not, condemn. Among our books

also a very small number will be found to have fixed the attention, and to have made the indelible impression. The scenes of nature will have been laid under contribution by here and there a mind, like Beattie's in his own Minstrel, and to have yielded an hourly revenue of beauty and grandeur, to enrich the character, and ennoble the conceptions. But from the world of men we shall find we have borrowed the most of what we are. The feelings, excited by a scene of oppression, of atrocity, or of extreme distress; of the extravagance of wealth, or the frivolity of dissipation, if revived again at intervals, may have formed a Draco or a Montbar, a philanthropist or a cynic, a miser or a philosopher. A conviction too will be forced from us of the far greater frequency and facility of bad impressions, than of good ones. We shall also find among the millions of objects, which have assailed us, that most have failed in their attack; while a few, no more powerful *elsewhere* than the rest, have gained over *us* a commanding control. This must have been owing to some capital bent of the mind, early received and lastingly felt; the origin of which will be the great secret of our character. Few of these influences will be found consolatory, except those of religion.

"Were a hundred men," says our author, "to read you their memoirs, you would often, during the disclosure, regret to observe how many things may be the causes of irretrievable mischief."

He then proceeds to trace, in a masterly manner, the bent which a few of them received in early life, as the misanthropist, the man destitute of mental exertion, the man of mere genius, the projector, the antiquary, and the petty tyrant of a family and a neighbourhood.

The progress of the atheist is delineated, in the next letter, with a rare degree of conviction and eloquence. Were we ignorant of mankind, wonderful indeed would seem the means, by which the atheist *knows* there is no God.

"For unless he is omnipresent, unless he is at this moment in every place in the universe, he cannot know but there may be in some place manifestations of a Deity by which even *he* would be overpowered. If he does not know absolutely every agent in the universe, the one that he does not know may be God. If he is not himself the chief agent in the universe, and does not know what is so, that which is so may be God. If he is not in absolute possession of all the propositions that constitute universal truth, the one which he wants may be, that there is a God. If he cannot with certainty assign the cause of all that he perceives to exist, that cause may be a God. If he does not know every thing that has been done in the immeasurable ages that are past, some things may have been done by a God. Thus, unless he knows all things, that is, precludes another Deity by being one himself, he cannot know that the Being whose existence he rejects, does not exist."

The progress of atheism is represented as gradual. The causes of it are original indifference; professions of liberality; the pride of differing from others; the sophistry of the man, of his friends, and of his books; the rejection of revelation, and the consequent darkness of the mind; the gratification of pride as he advances; the progress in

guilt; the desire of freedom from that restraint on indulgence, which the belief of a God imposes; and lastly the herding of a band of profligates, to harden and destroy each other: where, having dared to exclaim together, "What is the Almighty, that *we* should serve him," each individual is emboldened to subjoin, "Who is the Lord, that *I* should obey his voice?"

The ensuing letter is one continued strain of sublime eloquence. After expressing his amazement, that a rational being can live daily in the sight of the Infinite Mind, and yet daily become more and more regardless and unconscious of his presence; Mr. F. arraigns him in judgment, and summons the numberless objects, animate and inanimate, those within his own mind and those without it, which were every hour proclaiming to him, with a silent, but irresistible oratory, the existence, the presence, the ineffable glory of the GREAT and LOFTY ONE, as swift witnesses of his amazing blindness, of his stupendous guilt. Gladly would we transcribe the whole letter, would our limits permit, and nothing short of the whole will do it justice.

In the 7th letter, Mr. F. concludes with some miscellaneous observations on the extreme versatility of the mind in changing its opinions; on the style, in which the Memoirs should be written, which should be as simple as possible; on their minuteness, depending on the fact how far they are to be circulated; and lastly, on the unblushing impudence, with which Rousseau, and others of both sexes, have hung themselves up to infamy by their "Histories" and "Confessions."

The next Essay is on "Decision of Character," a quality bolder than is usually believed, and, in spite of the frequency of obstinacy, rarely to be met with. The importance of it is happily illustrated in some of the ordinary occurrences of life. A man, destitute of it, never belongs to himself; but depends on others for his opinions and his purposes. Events shape the irresolute man, but in a wonderful manner bend to him who is resolute. The latter never wavers, he only deliberates; and as soon as he resolves, is expected to be, and is found, busily employed. Such a man never *wastes* his *passions*; but gives their undivided force to the purposes of his mind. He is exempted from the interference and opposition of others with respect to his plans; and if his manners are gentle, he usually compels those about him to fall in with them, and further their accomplishment; and he crushes opposition by inflexible obstinacy. This quality is represented as depending much on the organization of the body. As the frame of the lion gives him a courage, an impetuosity, and a determination, superior to those of larger animals; and as women in these respects are far surpassed by men; so the man of resolution will usually be found, in the firmness of his frame, equally to excel the mass of men. The first element of this character is declared to be a complete confidence in one's own judgment. The man possessed of it will listen to information from all quarters, but will set his own

value upon it. The next requisite is an inflexible resolution to pursue, without delay or indifference what the mind has once resolved as proper to be accomplished. Indolence, debility or caprice never check the exertions of such a mind; on the contrary, it is linked to its determination with iron bands; its purpose becomes its fate, and it must and will accomplish it unless arrested by calamity or death. In such a mind the passions and the reason act with one united effort. A ruling passion is also one capital feature of a decisive character, as all the others learn to submit to its guidance, and by habit it becomes invincible. The utmost powers of the mind are thus forced into the service of the favourite cause by this passion, which sweeps away as it advances all the trivial objections and little opposing motives, and seems almost to open a path through impossibilities. Wherever this quality is found, it can give dignity to the worst of men. Even Satan, in Paradise Lost, commands a degree of admiration, by his invincible resolution. But, when connected with virtue, it exalts its possessor to an elevation in the scale of being, which man seems otherwise incapable of obtaining.

"In this distinction," says our author, "no man ever exceeded, or ever will exceed, the late illustrious HOWARD.

"The energy of his determination was so great, that if instead of being habitual, it had been shewn only for a short time on particular occasions, it would have appeared a vehement impetuosity; but by being unintermitted, it had an equability of manner which scarcely appeared to exceed the tone of a calm constancy, it was so totally the reverse of any thing like turbulence or agitation. It was the calmness of an intensity kept uniform by the nature of the human mind forbidding it to be more, and by the character of the individual forbidding it to be less. The habitual passion of his mind was a measure of feeling almost equal to the temporary extremes and paroxysms of common minds: as a great river, in its customary state, is equal to a small or moderate one when swollen to a torrent.

"The moment of finishing his plans in deliberation, and commencing them in action, was the same. I wonder what must have been the amount of that bribe in emolument or pleasure, that would have detained him a week inactive after their final adjustment. The law which carries water down a declivity, was not more unconquerable and invariable than the determination of his feelings toward the main object. The importance of this object held his faculties in a state of excitement which was too rigid to be affected by lighter interests, and on which therefore the beauties of nature and of art had no power. He had no leisure feeling which he could spare to be diverted among the innumerable varieties of the extensive scene which he traversed; all his subordinate feelings lost their separate existence and operation, by falling into the grand one. There have not been wanting trivial minds, to mark this as a fault in his character. But the mere men of taste ought to be silent respecting such a man as Howard; he is above their sphere of judgment. The invisible spirits, who fulfil their commission of philanthropy among mortals, do not care about pictures, statues, and sumptuous buildings; and no more did he, when the time in which he must have inspected and admired them, would have been taken from the work to which he had consecrated his life. The curiosity which he might feel was reduced to wait till the hour should arrive, when its gratification should be presented by conscience, which kept a scrupulous charge of all his time, as the most sacred duty of that hour. If he was still at every hour, when it came, fated to feel the attractions of the fine arts but the second claim, they might

be sure of their revenge; for no other man will ever visit Rome under such a despotic consciousness of duty as to refuse himself time for surveying the magnificence of its ruins. Such a sin against taste is very far beyond the reach of common saintship to commit. It implied an inconceivable severity of conviction, that he had *one thing to do*, and that he who would do some great thing in this short life, must apply himself to the work with such a concentration of his forces, as, to idle spectators, who live only to amuse themselves, looks like insanity.

His attention was so strongly and tenaciously fixed on his object, that even at the greatest distance, like the Egyptian pyramids to travellers, it appeared to him with a luminous distinctness, as if it had been nigh, and beguiled the toilsome length of labour and enterprise by which he was to reach it. It was so conspicuous before him, that not a step deviated from the direction, and every moment and every day was an approximation. As his method referred every thing he did and thought to the end, and as his exertion did not relax for a moment, he made the trial, so seldom made, what is the utmost effect which may be granted to the last possible efforts of a human agent: and therefore what he did not accomplish, he might conclude to be placed beyond the sphere of mortal activity, and calmly leave to the immediate disposal of Omnipotence."

Who, after reading this short sketch, will not repine, that it was not filled up, till the last stroke was given to the finished portrait?

Courage is another essential requisite of the decisive character. This will be often and severely tried, by the disapprobation of friends, and the contempt and ridicule of others; sometimes by evils of a darker aspect, by serious sufferings, and by the prospect of death itself. The conduct of Luther when summoned to the diet of Worms, of Daniel, of Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego, are mentioned as sublime specimens of elevated decision. The good man, possessed of this character, says our author, should take care to prevent it from becoming unamiable. It is usually accompanied with reserve, with sternness, and with incompliance; with an alienation of feelings and of interests; with an impatience of correction, a tone of authority, and an unyielding dogmatism; with an intolerance to the prejudices and weaknesses of others, and a real insensibility to the tender and gentle feelings of the heart. Yet Lycurgus and Timoleon, Alfred and Gustavus Adolphus, are glorious examples of the union of these apparently opposite excellencies.

Various circumstances, says Mr. F. will confirm this character. One of these is opposition. Let such a man be opposed in the general tenor of his actions, and opposition will render him the service of an ally, by corroborating his inflexibility. Another is desertion. Many a man has become resolute by being left friendless in early life. Another is success, and another the habit of associating with inferiors. The man not possessed of decision may, our author thinks, acquire it in a measure by the following steps. He should first gain a clear and comprehensive knowledge of the concerns before him. He should cultivate a conclusive manner of reasoning. Reasoning should be his ordinary process of thinking. He should never leave

any question, which occurs to him, undecided. When the judgment is formed the man should *commit* himself, by doing something which will compel him to do more. The objects which engage the mind should be dignified, and the course proposed should meet the approbation of conscience.

In the first letter of the next Essay, Mr. F. remarks, that "a thoughtful judge of sentiments, books, and men, will often find reason to regret, that the language of censure is so easy and undefined. It costs no labour, and needs no intellect, to pronounce the words foolish, stupid, dull, odious, absurd, ridiculous." There is a competent number of words for this use of cheap censure. Among these are the words *Puritan*, *Methodist*, and *Jacobin*. Like these the epithet *Romantic* has become a vehicle of unmeaning reproach. He is romantic, whose imagination has the ascendency over his judgment; whose fancy throws its colours where reason ought to draw its lines; accumulates metaphors where reason ought to deduce its arguments; and presents images instead of thoughts, and scenes instead of disquisitions. That this should be the case in youth is not an unpromising symptom; but if it is so in maturer life, the mind is unfortunately constructed. Various operations of the imagination, when it has gained this ascendency, are unfolded in the next letter, and a censure deservedly severe is cast on the wretched garbage, daily disgorged upon the public, in the shape of plays, novels, and romances; the authors of which, we think, should long since have been sent to the isle of Anticyra, had they not pitched their tents on the borders of Lethe.

The third letter commences with the following remark: "One of the most obvious distinctions of the works of romance is an utter violation of all the relations between *means* and *ends*." This is illustrated by various examples. One of these is the plan, which many benevolent persons entertain, of civilizing savages without the aid of conquest. Mr. F. allows that a few such instances have been unaccountably successful, but insists that those, who build their hopes on these, lay just claims to the character of romance. Had he lived in our own country, he would not have thought this so hopeless a measure. The Creeks and the Cherokees would have turned his eye to the unstrung bow and broken arrow, to the scattered wampum and the falling wigwam, as indications that the character of the savage was dropping off. They would then have pointed to their houses and their barns, to their ploughs and their harvests; to their Bibles and their schools; and told him in good English, "See in all these things, which are *ours*, and procured by *ourselves*, one additional proof of the success of benevolence." The truth is, that, although romantic feelings are often indulged on this subject, yet the philosopher, in his closet, can conjure up snow storms and rivers, mountains and deserts, in quite as thick succession, and make them as cold and as wide, as inaccessible

and as noxious, as the philanthropist, in his benevolent journey, will ever realize. Mr. F. when he penned these remarks, seems to have forgotten the character of Howard, which he had been just delineating.

Another illustration of the extravagant estimate of means is the expectation of far too much from mere instruction, communicated either privately or from the desk. Mr. F.'s remarks on this subject are striking, and, though perhaps not just to the extent to which he carries them, have, with some alteration, been echoed by many a faithful clergyman. Perhaps in England his remarks may be *strictly* just. We hear, perhaps because we are so distant, of few revivals of religion in that country. If they are just, they are enough to palsy the exertions of ordinary minds, and cramp those of the most resolute. But to this country they will not apply, without much qualification. Here it is certainly true, that an honest and faithful minister of Jesus Christ rarely toils through life to no purpose. Few dig among the stones and earth continually, without discovering here and there a gem, to set in that "crown of glory which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give them at his coming." As a general rule it is also true, that the success of clergymen *here* is somewhat proportioned to the sincerity, the constancy, and the affectionate zeal of their efforts. We hold with Mr. F. the deep rooted corruption of man; we know that sin is the natural growth of the heart, and that this growth is rank and noxious; and are therefore ready to acknowledge the wildness of those schemers, who expect with their own puny instruments to cut down, at a blow, the growth of half a century. But we still believe, that with weapons of a better temper, and hands nerved with other strength, they may lay low even the proudest trees of the forest. We are therefore unwilling to allow that means have been so unavailing, as Mr. F. would represent. What would the venerable Vanderkemp, and the followers of the venerable Schwartz, answer, if interrogated on this subject? Or rather, to what do the hundreds of Hottentots and the ten thousands of Hindoos, on the coast of Coromandel, under God, attribute their conversion? And how does the great awakening in the time of President Edwards, and the numerous smaller ones, which have followed it to this time, harmonize with this representation?

Mr. Foster concludes his Essay with mentioning several of those to whom the epithet *romantic* is often unjustly applied. One of these is the man, who takes high examples for imitation; who contemplates, with emotion, the class of men, who have been illustrious for their wisdom or their excellence; and keeps them in view as the standard of character. Another is he, who devotes the privileges of the rank to which he belongs, to a mode of excellence, of which the people who compose it never dreamed. He is a third, who makes and inculcates great sacrifices for a purely moral and ideal reward. Another, who thinks himself

bound to realize as far, and as soon as possible, what in theory he approves and applauds. A fifth, is the man who aims at eminent personal attainments. Since the success of the plan depends wholly on himself, it is *romantic* only when there is some fatal intellectual or moral defect in the mind itself which has adopted it.

To be continued.

Religious Intelligence.

UNITED STATES.

AN ADDRESS TO THE CHURCHES AND CONGREGATIONS OF VERMONT.

THE General Convention of Congregational and Presbyterian Ministers in the State of Vermont, (assembled at Middlebury on the Ist day of Sept. 1807) impressed with a sense of the obligation lying on Christians to diffuse the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the glorious doctrines of his gospel; commiserating the case of the many thousands of precious souls in this State and the neighbouring territories, whose situation and circumstances prevent their enjoying those ordinances, which Christ hath appointed for the sanctification, comfort and salvation of men; and being desirous of affording them aid and assistance, formed themselves into a MISSIONARY SOCIETY, and appointed a board of Trustees to prepare the way for carrying into effect the designs of the society. This board was composed of the following persons. Rev. Asa Burton, D. D. Rev. Martin Tullar, Rev. Gershom C. Lyman, Rev. Lemuel Haynes, Rev. Jedidiah Bushnell, Rev. Thomas A. Merrill, Hon. Beriah Loomis, Hon. Elisha Allis, Samuel Miller, Esq. Col. Seth Storrs, Deac. Nathan Cooledge, and Deac. Timothy Boardman. Agreeably to the instructions of the Convention, the Trustees assembled at Cornwall, on the 8th day of October, 1807, and voted to send the following Address to the Churches and Congregations in this State, and parts adjacent.

DEAR BRETHREN AND FRIENDS,

WE beg leave to call your attention to a subject, important as the glory of the Saviour; interesting as the salvation of immortal souls.

From the unerring word of prophecy we are assured that the glorious kingdom of grace shall, in due time, be extended over the whole earth, and that all shall know the Lord, from the least to the greatest. But how is this to be effected? By the preaching of the gospel to "every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." This is the great, the principal mean, which Christ hath appointed, for spreading the light of divine truth. When he gave commission to his ministers, for the building up of his kingdom, he commanded them to "go and preach the gospel to every creature." This command, though directed immediately to ministers, necessarily implies an obligation on Christians, to aid them in the work. For, as the state of the world has ever been, and still is, the ministers of Christ cannot execute this command, without the pecuniary assistance of others. Thus the propagation of the gospel was first begun. Those, who had embraced it, enjoyed its institutions and tasted its sweetness, contributed to the support of the apostles, while they went and preached to others.

In this way has the gospel been spread; in this way, no doubt, will it continue to be spread, till "all nations shall see the salvation of God." Within a few years God hath opened the hearts of Christians in a remarkable manner to exert themselves in his cause, and disposed them to "honour the Lord with their substance," by their liberal contributions. These have enabled the messengers of his grace to carry the glad tidings of

salvation into many parts of the world, where the people sat in the "region and shadow of death." Many thousands, who must otherwise have perished in darkness, are now rejoicing among the ransomed of the Lord, and preparing to sing eternal praises to "Him, who hath redeemed them from the earth."

From a desire to aid on a work so glorious, this society has been formed; and we now earnestly solicit your liberal contributions and fervent prayers. We invite you to "come up to the help of the Lord;" to come forward to the relief of those, who are perishing and know not their danger, nor have any to warn them. If, at the house of the Lord, and the ordinances of the gospel, you find yourselves edified, refreshed and comforted, forget not the pious souls, scattered here and there, in new settlements, who are mourning after the Lord, and pass heavily along, "hardly bestead and hungry," because they cannot enjoy the provisions of God's house, those means of quickening and consolation which you enjoy. If you have tasted and seen that the Lord is good, are you not ready to invite, and solicitous to persuade all to come and taste and see the same goodness? Will you not cheerfully assist others to carry the invitation to those, whom your voices cannot reach?

Have affecting views of the "glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ," and of the divine plan of salvation, sometimes filled your hearts with joy, and "put a song of praise" into your mouths? Think, what have been your feelings, at such seasons, respecting those who are yet in the "gall of bitterness and bonds of iniquity?" Have not your desires and prayers, for their enlightening and conversion, been sincere and ardent? Have you not felt an anxiety, if possible, to do something for their spiritual good? Were these desires improper? Will you not then endeavour to revive them, and embrace the opportunity, now presented of gratifying them, by sending the means of instruction and sanctification to the destitute?

Should the enemy tempt you to withhold your liberality, by suggesting that some to whom Missionaries are sent, are able to help themselves, if disposed, be pleased to consider whether the great salvation did not come to our guilty world unsought? Whether the Lord did not follow you with the calls and offers of his grace, when you were fleeing from him, and had no desire of acquaintance with him! Had he not done this, what must have been your present condition? "Let the same mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." Follow the perfect example of your Lord, "who went about doing good," remembering that he said, "it is more blessed to give than to receive." If your prayers and alms ascend together, they shall come as a sweet memorial before the Lord, and your charity shall return into your own bosoms, for "he who watereth shall be watered himself."

MARTIN TULLAR, *Chairman.*
THOMAS A. MERRILL, *Sec.*

FOREIGN.

CATHOLIC MISSION IN CHINA.

Translated from the Memorial Europeen of Tuesday, June 2, 1806.

Extract from several Letters written by the Missionaries of the Foreign Missionary Seminary at Paris, dated from the Province of Sutchuen, in China.

THE Christian religion continues to make sensible progress in this province: 5181 heathens have embraced the faith in the course of the last year; 6039 children have been baptised. The infidels come of their own accord to be instructed, and to request books; which we gratuitously distribute among them, in order to acquaint them with both doctrines and morality. The mildness of the government, and the manner in which it conducts itself with respect to the Christians, make us hope to enjoy peace. We have experienced no persecutions under the government of the new emperor. The mandarins no longer receive the denunciations which the Pagans used to bring against us, on account of our religion. Religious assemblies are publicly held, without any interruption from the city governors.

In the district of Tonquin, a Christian, who had refused to give money for the support of a superstitious ceremony, was discharged by the collectors from a silk manufactory, where he gained his living. The newly baptised, vexed to see himself compelled to abandon his trade, entered an action against them. The mandarins gave the verdict in favour of the Christian; and said to his adversaries, "Since the Christians ask you for no money for the exercise of their religion, you have no right to force it from them for yours." In another district, a Christian, having refused to contribute to a comedy, wherein the Pagans made eulogia on their idols, was beaten by the collectors. The affair having been carried before the government of the place, they ordered the collectors to be arrested; and each of them to receive fifteen blows on their feet, for endeavouring, by their private authority, to force the Christians to contribute to a religious ceremony contrary to their consciences. Indeed, the converts hold their assemblies publicly, without any opposition from the government; and religion is preached in all public places and markets, without any obstacle being put in the way by the superintendents. After such a decided toleration there is the greatest reason to hope for an extensive progress to be made here in Christianity, if a sufficient number of evangelical labourers will but come to us, in order to preach in this vast province. It is 300 leagues from east to west, and 320 from north to south. It contains 12 cities of the first order, 19 of the second, and 110 of the third; and ten others which are called *Ting*, and are a part of the twelve first: it is divided into four parts, the east, west, north, and south. True religion is nearly equally spread through those four parts, and has made nearly equal progress. In the eastern division are reckoned 117 societies of Christians, 172 in the west, 43 in the north, and 132 in the south. The number of Christians in the whole, amounts to 48,000: whereas in 1785 there were only 24. But, in order to visit and administer to all the converts, an immense tract of country must be traversed, whilst there are, from the seminary at Paris, only four missionaries, comprehending the bishop and nineteen Chinese priests. We are now endeavouring to establish a national clergy. The schools in which the Christian religion is taught are not at all disturbed. The Pagans sometimes request us to admit their children, in order to teach them to read the school writers, and write their characters. We have, in this province, sixty four Christian schools; of which thirty five are boys, and twenty nine girls. It is melancholy to think we cannot increase these institutions; the poverty of the inhabitants generally forbid it. The emperor has sent for two new Lazarist missionaries to Pekin, who left Canton last summer, in order to go to the capital.

By these letters we find that the hordes of rebels, who troubled the empire in 1803, are entirely dispersed; and that the late report of civil war, rumoured abroad by some misinformed merchants, deserves no credit.

Literary Intelligence.

UNITED STATES.

A GENERAL DICTIONARY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

It is well known to the public that Mr. Webster, of New Haven, has been many years engaged in preparing materials for a new Dictionary of our language, to be executed on a plan different from that of any similar work now extant. As many literary gentlemen, either from inattention to the subject, or from misapprehension of the compiler's views, have questioned the necessity or the utility of such a dictionary; and most unwar-

rantable attempts have been made to excite prejudices against the contemplated work, we have obtained a brief statement of the plan of it, and the objects intended to be accomplished by this arduous undertaking.

I. The proposed dictionary is intended to supply the *defects* of the English dictionaries. The great improvements which have been made in many branches of knowledge, within the last thirty or forty years, and particularly in the various departments of *natural history*, as in chemistry, botany, zoology, mineralogy, &c. have introduced into our language many new terms, and essentially varied the application of others; by which means the dictionaries now in use are rendered extremely imperfect.

II. Another object is to correct the *errors* of the present dictionaries. These are far more in number than men of letters suppose. In orthography, the errors are but few, but some of them too palpable to be overlooked. In definitions, the errors are numerous and important. These have proceeded, Mr. Webster supposes, from Johnson's "mistaking the sense of words used in his authorities, or from his ignorance of etymology. A want of nice discrimination between the senses of words which are apparently synonymous, or which have something common in their signification, has contributed to introduce or perpetuate a misapplication of terms, and much confusion of ideas."

In etymology, Johnson and Bailey, as well as all the other English authors of dictionaries, exhibit, in the view of Mr. Webster, little less than "a tissue of mistakes and imperfections; while the origin and history of our language lie buried in obscurity." In this unexplored field, Mr. Webster labours with great and very commendable diligence; tracing words to their radicals through *five*, *six*, and in some cases even *ten* and *twelve* different languages. By this means, he is usually enabled to arrive at the primitive idea annexed to a word, and to trace its several applications. This process we consider of great use in ascertaining both orthography and definition; and in explaining difficulties which have embarrassed former lexicographers. It unfolds also many historical facts, equally curious and interesting. This department of the work, the author supposes, will "require as much labour, as Johnson bestowed on his whole work."

III. Another principal object with the compiler, is, "to lessen the tax upon men of letters, imposed by the necessity of purchasing several dictionaries, and especially of purchasing a great deal of useless matter in Johnson's large work." It is believed to be practicable to unite the advantages of all the present dictionaries, and digest the whole work into a form and size, which shall be much less expensive, than even the single dictionary of Johnson, either in quarto or octavo. The plan of the work, now executing, has been laid before the Connecticut academy, and received their approbation.

It is intended to render this work as accurate and complete as possible. For this purpose the manuscript is read to the gentlemen of the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences, among whom are professors, classical scholars, and professional men of distinction, whose criticisms cannot fail to be very useful, and to render the work, what every such work ought to be, minutely accurate.

This great work, which requires the incessant labour of at least ten years, we are sorry, for our country's honour, to say, is undertaken as Johnson's dictionary was written, "with little assistance of the learned, and *without any patronage of the great.*" So incompetent are the author's resources to the expenses of the undertaking, that we understand he has not been able to procure all the books, which he wishes to consult. But his persuasion of the utility of the work, and his confidence of success, buoy him above despondence; while almost daily discoveries of something interesting in the history and progress of nations, contribute to smooth the rugged path of investigation.

CONNECTICUT ACADEMY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES.

THIS institution originated at New Haven in the spring of 1799. About twenty gentlemen, among whom were the President of Yale College, and the principal literary characters in the town, associated, formed a plan

of the Academy, and a Constitution. In October of the same year, an act of the legislature was obtained, incorporating them and their associates by the name of "The Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences," with the powers usually granted to similar bodies. Their stated meetings are on the fourth Tuesday of every second month, and their annual meeting on the fourth Tuesday of October, for the choice of officers, at which time an oration is pronounced by one of the members. Each member pays a small fee on admission, and one dollar annually, to the funds of the Academy.

The objects of the Academy are the promotion of every branch of science and all useful arts; but their attention has been principally directed to procure a statistical account of Connecticut. Some progress has been made in the collection of materials. A specimen of this work, comprehending a statistical account of the town of New Haven, from materials collected by the members belonging to that town, is now preparing for the press, and will probably be published in the ensuing spring. The Academy have a small collection of papers on other subjects, which will probably be published during the present year.

SCOTT'S COMMENTARY ON THE BIBLE.

THE fourth volume of Scott's Commentary on the Bible, embracing the N. Testament, publishing by W. W. Woodward of Philadelphia, is printed as far as the sixteenth chapter of St. John's gospel. The English revised edition, which the American editor copies, is not yet completed, which occasions the delay. The remainder of the English copy is expected early in the spring.

Mr. Woodward is about issuing proposals for publishing the works of Dr. Scott, consisting of sermons, essays, treatises, &c. in three or four handsome 8vo. volumes, to be copied from an elegant edition just printed in London. These volumes, from the pen of so eminent a divine, we doubt not will be highly acceptable to the American religious public.

Poetry.

Since 1780, *the following lines of Cowper emphatically apply to Massachusetts.*

"SLAVES cannot breathe in *Massachusetts;* if their lungs
Receive our air, that moment they are free;
They touch our country, and their shackles fall.
That's noble! and bespeaks a nation proud
And jealous of the blessing. Spread it, then,
And let it circulate through ev'ry vein
Of our republic: That where *Columbia's* pow'r
Is felt, mankind may feel her mercy too!"

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

ALPHA, XENOS, C. D. and H. are received and on our files for publication. The request of *Simeon*, whose communication is received, shall be faithfully attended to, as soon as prior engagements are fulfilled.

We regret the necessity of deferring till the next month, the *review* of Mr. Griffin's sermon, which shall then certainly appear, together with one of Rev. Mr. Taggart's sermon before the Hampshire Missionary Society, and obituary notices of Deacon John Larkin, Rev. Dr. Linn, and several others, prepared for this number.

The request of *Candidus* in respect to his *Prolegamena* and *Prize Questions* shall be attended to next month. The delay is unavoidable.